Saturday, January 17, 2009 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 40 P18 www.inquirer.net

Court of Appeals grants habeas corpus petition of 'Alabang Boys' NEWS / A2

Heavy rains continue, death toll rising; 'weird' weather to last till February ACROSS / A14

Unknown leads are key to 'Slumdog's' success SATURDAY SPECIAL / E1

Honor student shot, killed by drug-crazed teens METRO / A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MIRACLE ON HUDSON RIVER

Birds bring down jet; all 155 aboard survive

ON A WING AND A PRAYER A US Airways pilot masterfully and calmly lands his disabled plane into the frigid Hudson River in New York City after a collision with a flock of geese knocks out both engines. Passengers wait on the wings of the jetliner to be rescued (left). Paramedics treat at least 78 patients. The pilot, Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, was being hailed as the "Hero of the Hudson." A4

NEW YORK—A US AIRWAYS PILOT ditched his disabled jetliner into the frigid Hudson River in full view of New York City skyscrapers on Thursday after a collision with a flock of birds apparently knocked out both engines.

Rescuers pulled all 155 people on board into boats in the plane crash. Incredibly, there were no fatalities.

One victim suffered two broken legs. Paramedics treated at least 78 patients, most for minor injuries.

New York Gov. David Paterson pronounced it "a miracle on the Hudson."

Flight 1549 went down minutes after takeoff from LaGuardia Airport for Charlotte, North Carolina.

A former Air Force fighter pilot with 40 years of flying experience, Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger was praised for his heroism in bring-

MIRO A4

Sulu kidnappers known

AFP, MILF hunt abductors of 3 Red Cross workers

By Julie Alipala, Jeoffrey Maitem and Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez
Inquirer Mindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE abductors of three workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have fled with their captives to the town of Talipao in Sulu, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said yesterday.

The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) also made a similar claim, saying its forces had joined the hunt for Albader Parad and his men, allegedly of the bandit group Abu Sayyaf.

Teodoro told reporters during a calamity assessment in Misamis Oriental that troops had been sent to Talipao in an effort to free Andreas Notter, a Swiss national who heads the Red Cross branch in Zamboanga City; Eugenio Vagni of Italy; and Filipino engineer Jean Lacaba.

He said he and other officials had asked

BALITA A6

THE MAN BEHIND ESTRADA'S OUSTER Once mortal enemies (and before that, the best of friends), former President Estrada and former Gov. Chavit Singson shake hands and let bygones be bygones when the latter on Friday condoles with Estrada on the death of his mother Doña Mary Ejercito at the Pinaglabanan Church in San Juan. Even in death, it would seem, the mother continues to look after her favorite son Joseph. She'll be laid to rest this morning at the family mausoleum in the San Juan Cemetery.

Benguet veggie farmers on frost-watch

By Delmar Carino
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE WEATHER in this vegetable-growing province has been exceptionally cold this month and farmers here are on a frost watch as the temperature in upland towns dropped to 6 Celsius yesterday.

But agriculture officials have allayed fears of massive frosts—the white powdery layer of ice formed when air temperature falls below the freezing point of water—occurring in Benguet.

They said strong winds have helped defuse potential frosts happening in the

BENGUET A5

Mom's wake reconciles Erap and Chavit

By DJ Yap

A GRIEVING JOSEPH ESTRADA WAS REUNITED with his old foe, Luis "Chavit" Singson, in front of his mother's casket last night—their first meeting since the former Ilocos Sur governor brought about his downfall eight years ago.

The former President and Singson shook hands yesterday during the Mass for Estrada's mother Maria "Doña Mary" Ejercito, who died Tuesday afternoon.

"I've forgiven him long ago. He's welcome to come here. I'm happy that so many people want to condole with us," Estrada said moments before their meeting at the St. John the Baptist Parish of the Pinaglabanan Church in San Juan City.

PEOPLE A4

Erap: Mama could not turn her back on family 'black sheep'

By Ernesto G. Velarde
Entertainment editor

THE MOTHER OF A MAN WHO would be president did not even think he should run for mayor.

"Hindi daw dapat (I will not vote for you)," Maria Marcela Ejercito, fondly called Doña Mary, told her son Joseph Estrada when he announced his plan to run for mayor in San Juan in 1967.

"Ipaglalaban pa rin ang dapat ang kaligtas ko, nakababa (I will campaign for your opponent. You'll be running against my friends—it's embarrassing)," said Doña Mary.

Estrada recalled this in an

SHOW A4

NY court acquits 10 Pinoy nurses

By Kristine L. Alave

THE NEW YORK SUPREME court has acquitted 10 Filipino nurses from criminal charges that they endangered their patients when they resigned from their jobs in a Long Island nursing home in 2006, in protest against recruitment violations.

The case was brought against the nurses by the Sentosa Recruitment Agency which hired them from the Philippines for a three-year working contract in the United States.

In the decision issued on Tuesday and relayed to the Inquirer by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) yesterday, the court's second appellate division also stopped the prosecutor of Suffolk district county, where the original suit was filed, from pursuing criminal charges against the 10 nurses and their lawyer.

The 10 nurses who were acquitted were Ebeey Asetre, Juliet Avilla, Harriet Avila, Marlyn Cruz, Claudine Gamias, Jen-

MY COURT A4

Charice: 'One moment in time' for Obama show

By Pocholo Concepcion
Entertainment

AS THE PROGRAM FOR US President-elect Barack Obama's inaugural ball—the party that follows the swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 20—have Americans all agog for its lineup of performers, a separate set of shows preceding it has got Filipinos doubly excited.

A series of pre-inaugural parties has been organized to build momentum to the main event; one of them, to be held on Jan.

CHARICE A4

Puno on Palace run: I'll consult 'moral force,' my 'apos'

By Norman Bordadora

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF babes...

Chief Justice Reynato Puno intends to tap the wisdom of his "advisers" in dealing with calls that he run for president.

Asked by reporters to comment on Sen. Padilla Lacson's statement on Thursday that he was willing to forego his own ambition for the presidency if Puno would seek the top post, the Chief Justice thanked the opposition senator for his "endorsement."

"I have to consult my advisers on how to respond to these calls," Puno said, adding:

"And my council of advisers is composed of my grandchildren, aged seven, five and four. They will be deciding this issue and they are my moral force."

Turning serious, Puno said being Chief Justice remained his top priority and that "we should keep politics out of the judiciary."

He also said he did not

PUNO A7

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Dry again. Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with some isolated rain. Highest temperatures: Metro Manila, 32 degrees Celsius; Baguio City, 24; Tuguegarao, 30; Legazpi, 31; Iloilo City, 31; Cebu City, 31; Davao City, 32; Cagayan de Oro City, 31; Zamboanga City, 32

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Subic/Clark	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Batangas	Mostly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy	Cubao	Mostly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly cloudy
Metro Basin	Mostly cloudy	San Jacinto	Cloudy with rain
Tagaytay	Partly cloudy	Dumaguete	Partly cloudy
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga City	Cloudy with rain
Calapan	Partly cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with rain

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: p_news@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/fpage

EZ2 (date: January 16, 2009): 15 8 30 26

SUERTRES (date: January 16, 2009): 1 7 2 / 5 6 0 / 8 3 7 9 / 6 2 5

FOUR DIGIT (date: January 16, 2009): 8 3 7 9

MEGALOTTO 6/45 (date: January 14, 2009): 2 6 15 25 36 32

P4,947,935.40

No-show by cops led to junking of 600 drug cases

By Marlon Ramos

THE FAILURE OF POLICEMEN to attend court hearings has led to the dismissal of close to 600 cases involving illegal drugs in eleven months during the last eight years, according to the records of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

From January 2000 to October 2008, 535 cases against eleven 1,000 drug suspects were dropped by judges and state prosecutors as police officers belonging to different units of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) failed to appear as witnesses after filing the cases.

The records showed that noshow-cop agents of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) accounted for more than half of the dismissed cases against drug suspects.

The dismal record was followed closely by the Manila Police District (MPD) and Eastern Police District.

But police authorities appeared only too aware of the negligence. A check made by the reporters with the NCRPO's Personnel and Records Management Division revealed that hundreds of police officers who have reasons in attending court proceedings were either sacked, suspended, demoted or reprimanded during the period.

In 2008 alone, the NCRPO dismissed 74 policemen and suspended dozens others for the offenses.

A senior NCRPO official interviewed by the reporters admitted that the problem regarding the dismissal of drug cases had become a major factor for the lackluster result of the government's campaign to curb drug peddling in the metropolis.

The official, who requested that he not be identified for fear of reprisal from his superiors, admitted that some unscrupulous cops were behind by the arrested suspects or their families to unconditionally drop court hearings.

"Once the cases against them are dropped, the suspects will be freed from jail and go back to their old ways, selling and using illegal drugs," the police official lamented.

To address the problem, NCRPO chief Director Leopoldo Bataoil, recently issued a directive ordering policemen that failure to attend to their court duties was a violation of a provision of Republic Act 9165, or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2008.

He said policemen found guilty of dumping the prosecution of drug cases—either intentional or not—could end up being jailed for 12 years to 20 years.

"The failure of law enforcers, intentionally or negligently, to appear as witnesses for the prosecution in any proceedings, shall be punished with imprisonment of 12 years to 20 years and a fine of not less than P500,000 in addition to the administrative liability," he said in a statement.

He added that police officials whose subordinates failed to appear in court trials also faced jail terms and fines "along with the absolute disqualification from your."

Produce 'Alabang Boys' in court, CA tells PDEA

By Norman Bordadora and Jeannette I. Andrade

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS GRANTED THE petition for a writ of habeas corpus to two of the so-called Alabang Boys, according to a defense counsel.

Lawyer Feliberto Weame told the reporters yesterday that the appellate court division that considered the petition of two of the suspects' fathers—Richard Brodett and Joselito Yeson—ordered the respondent officials of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency to produce Richard Brodett and Joseph Yeson in court.

The two, along with Jorge Joseph, had been arrested after a drug buy-bust operation.

"There was an order issued to produce the boys in court and justify why they are detained," Weame said. He disclosed that the hearing had been set on Jan. 23 at 2 p.m.

Weame said the two respondents were expected to be immediately released if the PDEA failed to convince the court about the reasons for their continued detention despite the Department of Justice resolution finding no probable cause for the filing of drug charges against them.

DOJ review

The petitioners, in filing for the writ on Jan. 6, asked the court to issue an order that the suspects should no longer be imprisoned for the same drug offenses "unless by the lawful order or process of a court having jurisdiction of the cases or offense."

The petitioners argued that a DOJ review of the dismissed drug charges against the two suspects and their fellow respondent Joseph did not require their continued detention in the absence of the revocation.

"As there is no express law or even an express declaration in the said Department Circular (that required an automatic review of dismissed drug cases) authorizing the continuous detention of the subjects, they should be released during the automatic review," the petitioners said.

"At present, there is no charge against the subjects. PDEA, therefore, has no reason to deprive the subjects of their liberty," they added.

Also asserting the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) said it was still hoping that PDEA special enforcement services chief Major Ferdinand Marcelino would reconsider and submit an affidavit implicating alleged P10-million payoff at the justice department.

The bribery issue cropped up after the PDEA released statements accusing state prosecutors of being paid off with some P10 million to dismiss drug charges against Brodett, Joseph and Yeson, who were arrested by operatives against an undercover agent in separate drug buys in Ayala, Alabang, and Cubao, Quezon City, on Sept. 23, 2008. Illegally seized from the three were amounts of the banned narcotics ecstasy, cocaine and marijuana.

Disini open to plea bargain

WHAT HAVE YOU TO OFFER?

A former gold envoy of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos has indicated that he is willing to enter into a plea bargaining agreement with the government over the cases filed against him for allegedly receiving $10 million in bribes for the construction of the mothballed Bataan nuclear power plant.

In an amended pretrial brief, businessman Herminio T. Disini said he was "willing to listen" and "possibly consider" any plea bargaining offer from prosecutors.

The Sandiganbayan First Division is currently hearing two criminal cases—corruption of public officials and violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act—against Disini. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Marine officer cited for contempt in trial

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE USUALLY STOIC COURT MARTIAL proceedings on the February 2006 Marine scandal took a dramatic turn at the resumption of the hearings yesterday when the military prosecution head and an accused Marine officer engaged in a shouting match that ended with the latter's ejection from the courtroom.

Lt. Col. Achilles Segumalian, a former battalion commander deployed in Mindoro, was cited for contempt of court by his defense due never "unsalted rice" to the presence of the court.

"I drove the eyewitness to get Col. Segumalian out of the room and move him back to his detention quarters," ordered Maj. Gen. Jose Reuben Pejna, president of the general court martial.

Tempers flared when the Marine officer implicated in the alleged desabilitation plot in 2006 berated Trial Judge Advocate Lt. Col. Felicisimo Lay for missing his voice while arguing with a defense lawyer.

Lay and lawyer Victoire Bartolomeo were engaged in a heated argument over the memorizing of witnesses when Segumalian burred in and told Lay to tone down.

"Do not shout, let him [Bartolomeo] finish," said Segumalian. Lay answered back by telling the Marine officer not to raise his voice.

After Lay asked the court to rule Segumalian in contempt, the latter approached the prosecutor's desk and reportedly pointed a finger at the trial judge advocate.

Soldiers cited for contempt of court are usually given a maximum of 10 days in jail or are asked to pay a P500 fine. But Lay's defense's case, the penalty was only reprimand. From yesterday's proceedings, said his lawyer, "it can be higher."

Lay had to restrain himself after security guards took Segumalian out of the courtroom, saying he had to see a doctor as he was having palpitations.

Segumalian said later that he would apologize to the court, but pointed out that the prosecution must show them some respect.

"I did not intend to show any disrespect to the court. I was provoked by the behavior of the prosecution lawyer," he told reporters. "I've been in the service fighting wars for more than 28 years and I won't allow anyone to treat me that way."

Segumalian and 37 others had been linked to an alleged plot by former Army Scout Rangers chief Brigadier General Danilo Lim and Marine Colonel Ariel Querubin to lead soldiers in a "peaceful" withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo during times of election fraud.

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New SC justice admits friendship with GMA, but...

By Norman Bordadora

HONOR, YES, BUT...

Newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Diosdado Peralta yesterday admitted he and President Macapagal-Arroyo were friends, but indicated the relationship would not get in the way of his work in the high tribunal.

Chief Justice Reynato Puno administered Peralta's oath as new associate justice yesterday morning with Justices of the high tribunal, the Court of Appeals and the Sandiganbayan in attendance.

Asked by reporters to describe his relationship with Ms Arroyo, Peralta replied: "I'm a friend. But as I said, as far as my work is concerned, my friendship ends when my work begins."

Peralta said people he had worked with as a judge and a Sandiganbayan justice could attest to the fact that he is his own man. "I have always been independent-minded," he added.

The 56-year-old justice said he first met Ms Arroyo in 2002 when he received an award as outstanding regional trial court judge.

He also dismissed notions that his appointment to the high court was a reward for being a member of the Sandiganbayan special division that convicted deposed President Estrada. "I was a presiding justice of the Sandiganbayan. The only reward is to be appointed," he said.

He also glossed over reports

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Mom's wake reconciles Erap ...

Front page A1

Sorsogon, in a separate interview with reporters before he entered the church at 4:30 p.m., said he just wanted to extend his sympathy to Estrada, who he described as his "former friend."

"Kalibgan lang shirt (He was my friend). Even before, I was already talking to Joseph Estrada and also [Senator] Chavit," Sorsogon said. "It's the culture of Filipinos to express one's sympathies when somebody dies."

P4,000 wreath

The P4,000 wreath, delivered on Wednesday afternoon, remained unclaimed, drawing off by the almost 200 flowers arrangements sent by friends of the family.

The baryons confirmed that it was Sorsogon's office that ordered the wreath from L. Carlos Florist.

"It was his secretary who ordered it this morning. They actually asked us not to put Sorsogon in the [ribbon]," Lolita Sierra, L. Carlos cashier, told the baryons on Wednesday.

The wreath had the name "Chavit" printed on a white ribbon. Its short message read: "My sincere condolences."

Administration officials had also sent flowers, including Vice President Noli de Castro, House Speaker Prospero Nograles and Cabinet officials Leo Aitorna, Gilbert Teodoro, Rolando Puno, Mariamito Roque, Peter Favila and Angelo Reyes.

Olive branch?

Chavit, however, would not give a direct answer when asked if he was offering an olive branch to Estrada, who was ousted from the presidency in a popular public uprising following Singson's explosive testimony about Estrada's kickbacks from illegal gambling activities.

"Nung dinetiga lang kaya ito (You're just creating controversy)," he told reporters yesterday.

Old wounds

At the Mass, the two men exchanged words in front of Santa Mary's reader and seemed cordial throughout the exchange. Estrada was seen openly smiling.

Singson later shook hands with Estrada's son, Jinggoy Estrada, and other members of the family. He did not shake hands with Estrada's wife, Senator Sen. Loi Estrada, who was pulled back throughout.

Estrada's other son, Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, also appeared to have made himself scarce when the meeting took place.

Loi and JV told reporters in separate interviews beforehand that although Singson was welcome to come, they personally wished he did not, citing old wounds.

Estrada and Singson left together and were spirited away from the wake by their bodyguards through an exit at the back of the church.

Sending feelers

Hours before their meeting, Singson had sent his feelers to the Estrada camp about his intention to attend Santa Mary's wake. His camp had also sent word to the media about a "big surprise visitor" at 5 p.m.

But Estrada was not yet in the church at the time, and Singson said he did not want to arrive without Estrada there, said Linggoy Alcuaz, an opposition figure identified with the latter's presidential contender and senator Panfilo Pac-Ib.

"It's a chicken-and-egg situation," Alcuaz said, noting that each camp was waiting for the other party to make its move.

Finally, Estrada son United Opposition president and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay as a "buffer" so that somebody would be there to personally welcome Singson, Alcuaz said.

Angel Garong, Estrada's media liaison officer, also told reporters that having been Manny Pacquiao would be with Singson, perhaps to cushion the impact of his arrival. But there was no Pacquiao when Singson came. With a report from Edison C. Bordac Jr.

Erap: Mama could not turn her back

Front page A1

earlier interview. "It was time," he said. "They were friends of hers (the Bocas and his Dominique political clans) because, you know, we were all old San Juan families."

It was not the first time Estrada has spoken her mind against the decision that her son's second to the youngest of 10 children) she was raising. Almost ten years prior, where she walked forth was actions about a rumor in the movies, she was far from pleased.

Declaration of independence

"I was the black sheep of the family—yesterday cowboy at horse, yesterday fat-headed. (I would bring out on a street corner with my gang mates)," he recounted in their interview.

His father Emilio was an engineer, and wanted Estrada to be an engineer, too. He took up civil engineering but dropped out after his third year. It was, he said, his declaration of independence.

Estrada started playing bit roles in the movies. The first time he was given enough attention to deserve the services of the makeup man, he was so excited, he left the Quezon City location to have lunch with the family in San Juan—and to break the news. For effect, he did not wash off the grease paint. "para makita nila na artista na ako talaga (so they would see I was now a full-fledged artist)."

As he strutted himself at the table, his mother said flatly, "Huwag nang magartista pero ang pangalang Ejercito ay pulitika, nakakahiya (Don't ever use the name Ejercito in the movies. It's embarrassing)."

Estrada remembered shooting back at his mom nearly that, he said, he could not remember. "Ang sabi ko, 'Nanay, ang pangalang Ejercito ay simbolo ng pagkabayani (Nay, the name Ejercito is the symbol of heroism)'," he said, invoking the name of his father who served as a guerrilla fighter during the Japanese occupation.

Estrada remembered shooting back at his mom nearly that, he said, he could not remember. "Ang sabi ko, 'Nanay, ang pangalang Ejercito ay simbolo ng pagkabayani (Nay, the name Ejercito is the symbol of heroism)'," he said, invoking the name of his father who served as a guerrilla fighter during the Japanese occupation.

Don't stop me

Estrada said, "I told her, 'All right, do what you will. Don't support me, but don't stop me.'"

One day, while campaigning on foot, "[knocking from door to door," he ran into his mom. Estrada will never forget their chance meeting: "Ang init-init ng araw, nakabad ng old na, nilag-aagaw—dugtungan pa rin ako ng Mama ko. Hindi ako pinatigil (The sun was hot, sweat was dripping, I was old already, but my mom continued to accompany me—proof that no parent can turn her back on his child)."

Funeral today

Doña Mary will be laid to rest at the Ejercito mausoleum at the San Juan public cemetery less than two kilometers from the Pinaglabanan Church.

Some 200 policemen will be deployed to secure the funeral march from the church to the mausoleum immediately following the Mass scheduled at 9 a.m., said Supt. Pompeyo Ligsay, the San Juan police chief.

But traffic will be re-routed as early as 7 a.m. at the corner of Pinaglabanan and N. Domingo Streets near the church, as well as Ascodan Road, where the cemetery is located at the other end of the route, Ligsay said.

The official said he expects thousands to attend the Mass. He discouraged funeral-goers from other Ejercito-Estrada family to take their cars, saying he expected a massive traffic gridlock. With a report from Dy Buc

Baguio chills at 7.5 Celsius, coldest in 23 years; human blanket needed

By Vincent Cabreza and Khristine Love Vicente
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—NITE THE pioneer in this mountain city going south, old-time residents yearning for the return of Baguio weather may just get their wish.

On Thursday, the mercury registered 7.5 Celsius, the coldest since January 1986, and just a little more than a degree higher than the cold-on morning experienced in Baguio in 1961.

Some celebrants walked out of their houses on Thursday wearing the thick coats they had been storing in their closets since the 1970s when chilly temperatures of between 9 and 10 Celsius were quite normal in the months of November, December and January.

Flora Aquino, weather observer of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), said the temperature recorded last Thursday was the fifth coldest experienced in Baguio since Jan. 18, 1961, when the mercury dropped to 6.3 Celsius.

According to Aquino, the other coldest days here were Feb. 28, 1963 at 6.7 degrees; Jan. 6, 1986 at 6.8 degrees; Jan. 9, 1971 at 7.1 degrees, and Dec. 13, 1981 at 7.4 degrees.

Until February

Pagasa expects falling temperatures to continue into February because of the cold front brought on by the northeast monsoon.

A group of Cordillera women selling herbal medicines on Session Road and Mabini Street was spotted on Thursday morning huddled together under a thick blanket.

Baguio residents, also angularly meet in downtown coffee shops, said they were so

joined that the temperature had dropped further after Wednesday's 10.4 degrees.

Radio broadcaster Nick Calloso, 48, said he has always longed for this kind of weather, which he expects around as a gentle school student here.

Unusual but welcome

"This is maybe [the effect of] global warming ... but then this means global warming is good for us. I am 78 years old. I was around when Baguio was freezing from 6 degrees C (Celsius). I was the youngest when the weather started to get really warm. Seeing back [the clock to see again experience cold at] 7 degrees is unusual but very welcome," said Socrates Dydi, a farmer councilor.

Bernardo Bolasing, 55, president of the Benguet Association of Retired Persons (BARP), remembers Baguio's coldest day.

"I was 30 years old. Those were the days when we could put out a pair of water at night so we would have ice in the morning. It would be nice to get fresh ice again," said Bolasing.

Love it

"Our members have been excited about the weather. We were up and we all started exchanging [phone calls] about the weather. This is a memorable weather. This is why we [old Baguio residents] are fond of saying, 'This is the weather when we need a blanket blanket,'" he said.

Bolasing was also the kind of weather that more recent Baguio residents may not totally appreciate, he said.

"I know this is making young people sick. We are old but we recognize this weather because we [experienced] it before. [Young Baguio residents] should not know what Baguio cold really feels like," he said.

Benguet farmers ...

Front page A1

major vegetable-growing areas, except in some farms in mid-hillsides mountainsides.

"But there is no damage to speak of. There may be frost on some lowes that are cultivated to be reached by sunlight early in the morning but they are small and isolated cases," said provincial agriculturist Lolita Bautista.

Surveying the weather bureau in Baguio recorded the temperature at 9.8 Celsius, slightly higher than the 7.5 degrees recorded in the city on Thursday morning.

Benguet's upland vegetable-growing towns usually experience colder weather than Baguio, usually 3 to 5 degrees lower. The cough, on Thursday, was Atok, the temperature went down to 5 degrees. The reading was taken before sunrise by the agriculture office in that town.

'Little Alaska'

Bautista said she has not received any reports of frost damage in the most sensitive areas of the province—the villages of Halsi to Mankayan town, Pasay in Atok, Madiyas- sen in Bilwangan and Kaminking in Buguias.

These areas, known as Benguet's "Little Alaska" for being the coldest at this time of year, are the cross-of-row hit then where massive frosts have occurred in the past.

Fred Bañiles, the Atok agriculture officer, said open of these his Barangay Pasay on Thursday but those were isolated. These are small farms located along slopes or deep areas not easily reached by sunlight, he said.

"The farmers are also busy preparing their land for planting so their would be no alarming damage to the vegetables if frost should occur," he said.

Homer Tebalaro, barangay chief of Mudayaten, said the weather was exceptionally cold this Thursday but there was no frost.

He said strong winds in the morning helped ease the cold. "But even the breeze was so cold that we had to wear scarves to cover our faces," he said.

Tebalaro said some farmers are worried that frosts may occur if the cold temperatures persists.

Aurora Aran, the agriculturist at Buguias, said no frost occurred in the barangays at Buguiasang and Buyagoy, he learned to be the town's cold on at once.

NY Supreme Court acquits 10 Pinoy nurses

Front page A1

THE VERDICT IS IN The medical board supervisor in 2004, Elmer Jacinto, made unsubstantiated accusations of abuse against nurses in the US. On Friday, he made news for winning a case against the Sentosa Care Group which had filed a $50-M damage suit against them for allegedly endangering the lives of their patients when they resigned en masse from a rehab and healthcare facility in upstate New York.

ialist Lanipe, Klaus Morales, Jimmi Molina, Ms. Theresa Ramos and Ramir Ilocbet.

Some of the nurses had been working as doctors in the Philippines and took up nursing to be able to work in the US. Jacinto, for instance, a licensed doctor, topped the medical board examinations in 2004.

The nurses' lawyer, Felix Holman, who was accused of conspiring with the petitioners, was also acquitted.

Involuntary servitude outlawed

The New York court granted the nurses' petition to stop the Suffolk county from prosecuting them, saying that their resignation did not endanger their patients as they did it after their shifts ended.

The court also noted that the prosecution's insistence that the nurses' resignation constituted the welfare of their patients, which included children, were "speculative" and that they had the "constitutional right to be free from involuntary service."

Stopping the nurses from resigning their jobs was a violation of the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlaws slavery and involuntary servitude, the court said.

The lawmakers of Suffolk county upon the nurses' ability to freely exercise their right to resign from the service of an employer who allegedly failed to fulfill the promises and commitments made to them in the enforcement of the free and voluntary system of labor envisioned by the framers of the Thirteenth Amendment," the court said.

The court also ruled that Holman, as an immigration lawyer, had acted in good faith when he advised his clients to take action against Sentosa, the recruitment firm.

The nurses are part of a group of 27 Filipino health workers recruited to work by the Philippine-based Sentosa Recruitment Agency (SRA) for its New York-based parent company, the Sentosa Care Group.

The health workers group said the low

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We're not turning our back on RP—WB

By Michelle V. Ruivo

THE WORLD BANK isn't turning its back on the Philippines.

The multilateral lending agency yesterday said it would continue to financially support the country's efforts to grow the economy despite allegations of corruption surrounding the P4-billion road project that it funded.

Published reports yesterday said the World Bank had blacklisted seven construction firms from participating in any of its projects after an investigation showed that they ran collusion between the companies' officials and government employees in order to influence the bidding for the road project.

The bidding for the $55-million National Roads Improvement and Management Program 1 (NRMP1), held in 2007, was found to have been rigged in favor of the seven firms.

Ilser Heltman, the World Bank country director for the Philippines, said however that the incident would not in any way hamper the Philippines' ability to access loans from the bank.

"The [Philippine] government and the World Bank will continue to work together to be a broad range of development programs," Heltman said in a statement.

Although the World Bank canceled its plans to finance the NRMP 1 after reports of irregularities in the bidding, the bank's board approved financing for the NRMP 2, estimated to cost $232 million.

NRMP 2, a far bigger project than the first phase, covers the improvement of 450 kilometers of national arterial roads and bridges all over the country and the establishment of a comprehensive road maintenance program.

Heltman noted, however, that there were lessons learned from the alleged corruption in the NRMP 1.

"For instance, in the second phase of the project [NRMP 2], which was approved by the World Bank's board in May 2008, a battery of integrity anti-corruption measures was incorporated into the project's design," he said.

The World Bank is one of the Philippines' biggest sources of official development assistance.

Under its country assistance strategy, the World Bank is initially looking at granting $967.56 million worth of CDWs for the Philippines in 2009.

The measure will finance projects like the Road Crisis Response Development Policy Operation (estimated at $300 million), National Survey Support for Social Welfare and Development Reform Project ($400 million), and the southwestern project for Line 1 of the Light Rail Transit system ($200 million), among others.

The seven construction firms, the first three of which are Filipino-owned, blacklisted by the World Bank were the following: E.C. de Leon Construction Corp. (blacklisted permanently); Carlo Med International Construction and Development Corp. (blacklisted for four years); CM Pancho Construction (blacklisted for four years); China Road and Bridge Corp. (blacklisted for eight years); China Shen Construction Corp. (blacklisted for six years); China Wu Yi Co. Ltd. (blacklisted for six years), and China Geo-Engineering Corp. (blacklisted for five years).

Following the World Bank move, the government has temporarily disqualified the seven firms from participating in any government project.

Benedictine monks in concert

IF YOU LOVE GREGORIAN chants, especially when sung by real monks beneath the stained glass windows of a real abbey church, then the place to be in the evening of Jan. 30 is the chapel at San Beda College.

The Order's 1500th anniversary, the San Beda College's Abbey Church of Our Lady of Montserrat will be the venue of a sacred music concert celebrating the annual feast of the Sto. Niño de Praga. The musical event will also be a tribute to Our Lady of Montserrat, the patroness of the college after whom the first abbey of the Benedictine order in the country is named.

Dubbed "Candore in Sonitu" (Helpless in the Lord!), this rare musical experience will be held at 6 p.m. on Jan. 30 with the High School Glees of 1958 (the 2009 Golden Jubilarians), chaired by Prof. A. Aquino, as producer.

What makes this a classic concert special is the rare appearance of the Benedictine monks, who will sing traditional Gregorian chants, with Fr. Bernardo Pena, OSB, Rector Emeritus, as chairmaster.

The UST Liturgikos Ensemble and the UST Stress Ensemble will render excerpts from Georg Friedrich Händel's Messiah and compositions by Ludwig van Beethoven, Giovanni Gabrieli, Tomas Luis de Victoria, and other composers. Respected musician Fr. Bernabito Mercadito, OSB will play the organ.

Proceeds from the concert will go to the Pensioning Beda, The San Beda College Heritage Center.

Judy Ng Chu; 82

JUDY NG CHU DIED ON JAN. 12 after a lingering illness. She was 82.

She is survived by her children George and Rose Chu, Gregorio and Carmen Chu, Teresa and Betty Chu, Alfonso and Evelyn Bo, Frank and Ellie Chu, Miriam Chu, Henry and Lily Lim, and grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her body now lies at Room 202, Sacristarium, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

She will be cremated on Jan. 18, 2009, at 9 a.m.

The Daily Gospel

Saturday, January 17, 2009
1st Week in Ordinary Time
Saturday, Abbot

1st Reading: Heb 6:10-20
Gospel: Mk 2:13-17

When Jesus went out again beside the lake, a crowd came to him and he taught them. As he walked along, he saw a tax collector sitting in his office. The man's name was Levi, the son of Alphaeus. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And Levi got up and followed him.

And it so happened that while Jesus was sitting in Levi's house, tax collectors and sinners were sitting with him and his disciples for there were indeed many of them. But there were also scribes of the Pharisees' party among those who followed Jesus, and when they saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why is he one with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus heard them and answered, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Commentary

The attitude of Jesus toward the tax collectors was in stark contrast to that of the Pharisees. The Pharisees were separatists, and did not lower themselves to have anything to do with a tax collector, who was considered no better than a gentile. But Jesus never taught that there was anything inherently wrong with paying tribute to the Roman government or collecting the tax. He was opposed to unscrupulous, but would fling open the door of repentance and salvation to them. He rejected none, not even the worst.

To be a fair dealing tax collector was regarded as impossible for the Jews, but Jesus didn't hesitate to associate with them. He wouldn't with those, even though the Pharisees were offended. If the world had been righteous, there would have been no occasion for Jesus' coming either to preach repentance, or to open the kingdom to sinners. Where men advised a company with ungodly people out of love of their own conversation, but are not inclined to show love for their souls, remembering that Jesus had the power of his presence in himself to rejoice to do well for others, let us always be ready to acknowledge the power of forgiveness in Christ.

Sulu kidnappers known; AFP, MILF in massive hunt

By Jaime Al

the Red Cross to cooperate with the government less than it was deliberately not doing so.

"The problem is that the Red Cross doesn't want to coordinate with the Army because they are preserving their neutrality. But this is not about neutrality anymore; it's about pursuing criminals," Bendicio said.

Senior Supt. Arturo de Guzman, the police chief of Sulu, said the hostages by phone that rebels—at least manned and guard Radon Abu as one of the abductors.

"We were threatened recently ago that if there's military for other rescues," Radon said.

Abu, a nephew of Pamalli's wife, was also previously linked to the kidnapping of a Chinese national in Jolo last year, the police officers said.

Radon said police were tracking down a number of people involved in Abu, including his father, BPOS Batasl Abu of Zamboanga City.

Monitoring 24/7

The captives had just conducted field work and were on their way to the Jolo airport from the provincial capital when seized at gunpoint at around 10 a.m. on Thursday.

It was Dark driver and two Filipino companions, who were forced out of their van by the gunmen, who reported the abduction to authorities.

A statement issued yesterday by the office of Roland Bigler, the Red Cross communications director in Manila, said nothing had been heard from the "perpetrators" and that the latest news about the captives was that they were sighted in Talipao on Thursday night.

"We have informed the families, and the Red Cross has taken steps to provide them counseling and assistance," Bigler said.

He said the Red Cross had formed a team in Zamboanga City to keep tabs on the situation on the ground. "We have set up a monitoring room to check on leads and all lines of communication. That's 24/7."

According to Bigler, the Red Cross has friends and partners in the region that has helped it in times of crisis.

He said the Red Cross would not halt its humanitarian aid in the region, which has seen armed conflict between separatist groups and government troops for decades, and that it would continue educating the public on its neutral stance.

"The Red Cross' neutrality and independence are to operating participation for the past 150 years," Bigler said.

Tesdoro warned the Red Cross against taking independent moves to negotiate with the abductors.

2,000-strong troops

In Camp Aguinaldo, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Yano ordered a 2,000-strong force organized to intensify government operations and information gathering for the rescue of the captives.

Yano identified the three towns in Sulu where Task Force Comet should focus its operations—Talipao, Indanan and Pualiel, where the captives were boating the Red Cross lodging was found.

His instruction was to employ whatever we have to accomplish the mission and rescue the kidnapped victims being Sari and four operators on the three municipalities," Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres Jr., the AFP spokesperson, said in a press briefing.

Torres said screening the three towns was one way of limiting the hostile group's movement.

He set someone there in a particular area, we increase the pressure on the group in the hope that by doing so, they would release the victims," he said.

The military also renewed its call for locals and foreigners visiting war-torn provinces in Mindanao to coordinate with the military or the police and local government authorities so that they could be provided sufficient security.

Torres stressed the importance of visitors coordinating with security officials when visiting conflict areas in Mindanao. "We can give them an updated assessment on the security situation in the area.

"From there, we will know the appropriate security measures that can be provided them and inform them the limits of their movements in the area."

Cat-and-mouse chase

Lt. Gen. Nelson Allaga, chief of the Western Mindanao Command, said the soldiers had yet to make contact with the abductors.

"They are in a cat-and-mouse chase," he said.

In Zamboanga City, Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan told the Inquirer by phone: "We have so many leads and we are pursuing them now."

Tan warned the abductors to release the captives, saying: "We are not going to negotiate. "We don't have time. They should release the captives yet, but I would like to state clearly here that we are not opening any line of communication with the kidnappers. We don't negotiate. They

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said the government would not just rest its men and workers in Sulu despite the Thursday abduction.

"We are very sorry this happened. We condemn the violent act that happened to these three people ... and we hope that these will be no further incidents like this," Cabral told reporters in Malacañang, where she joined Mrs Arroyo in meeting 138 schoolchildren from Bulacan, Chino, who survived a deadly southbound bus tour.

Duncan said cows RMN radio that Mrs Arroyo was angered by the abduction.

"They're really terrible people. They have no respect for international protocols," he said of the abductors.

The "tragedy of all this," he said, was that the captives were helping people in need.

US help

Duncan said the government would welcome any help for the rescue of the captives.

He said the United States had "elements" in Sulu that monitor, and in help the Philippine military in "capability building" in fighting terrorism.

"I am sure they will be assisting our operations there with their technical support," Duncan said.

The Italian Embassy in Manila said it had formed a crisis

Birds bring down jet; all 155 aboard survive

From page A1

ing the Airbus A320 down safely in the river.

Safety officials said the 150 passengers and five crew members on board the flight were evacuated from the aircraft and were taken to nearby ferries and rescue boats.

Passengers were seen standing on the wings of the aircraft as they waited to be rescued.

Officials said there were no serious injuries among the passengers and crew.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the rescue was "miraculous" and that "everybody seems to be accounted for."

"Thanks to the skill of the pilot, the crew and the first responders, the incident ended with no loss of life," he said.

Chief Insp. Ronald Johnson, police chief of the Aviation Unit assigned to Maxillos Mendonza, said a tank farm was being formed "so we can coordinate our efforts with the military, civilians, local government and nongovernment organizations."

He said top police officials from the ARMM had been sent to Sulu to work closely with the local police.

Muhammad Ameen, chair of the MILF central committee's secretariat, said the safety of the captives was "utmost in our mind."

Ameen condemned the abduction and said the MILF's political and armed members in Sulu had been directed to help track the whereabouts of the captives and recommend the best options to be taken.

'Safe and sound' return

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"I am sure they will be assisting our operations there with their technical support," Duncan said.

The Italian Embassy in Manila said it had formed a crisis

SAFE AND SOUND Passengers from US Airways are sailing on the by Hudson River back on mainland and safety. REUTERS

MIRACLE WORKER Pilot Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger III after survivors US Airways jet. He guided the jet off the Hudson River, allowing passengers to make a successful emergency from the aircraft. A former military fighter pilot, he has over 40 years of flying experience in his has just been named Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. AP

from the engine mounted on the wing outside his window.

The plane banked left, being all clouds quickly.

Investor leaned forward in prayer. Fellow passenger Jeff Kolodjay said a Hail Mary.

Another passenger, Janet Sanderman, said the control of an explosion was followed by passengers running up the aisle and people being shoved out of the way.

"It was just controlled chaos," said Sanderman.

Women, children first

Passenger Allison Barnes said: "There was a mixed reaction of yelling and crying."

"Women and children first!" some male passengers shouted.

As the plane quickly drained of, passengers' Valley Calkins rapped out a text message to her husband, Steve: "My plane is crashing." Steve was desperately trying to figure out whether she had been on the downed plane when the messages arrived 20 minutes later.

Bob Read, a television producer, was near the exits from his office window, and it appeared to be a "controlled descent."

Help at hand

The gray waters of the Hudson lapped at the windows and began pouring into the cabin.

For a second, I thought I was just going to die right there in the plane," passenger Jo Dzbanski said. "I was going to drown to death."

Some passengers stood on a wing of the plane, to wait up to their knees, waiting for help. The air temperature was around minus 6.7 degrees Celsius (20 degrees Fahrenheit).

Survivors cheer

But help was already at hand, with 14 vessels from a ferry service and a sightseeing fleet rushing to the scene.

One commuter ferry, the Thomas Jefferson, arrived within minutes of the crash, and some of its crew aiders grabbed life vests and lines of rope and tossed them to people in the water.

"They were cheering when we pulled up," ferry captain Vincent Lynch said. "We had to pull an elderly woman out of a raft in a sling. She was crying. People were panicking. They said, 'hurry up, hurry up.'"

Divers said they pulled another 11 women from a lifeboat "frightened out of her mind" and lethargic from hypothermia.

Police and fire divers rescued some passengers from underwater.

Strangers bond

One woman had a 3-year-old child, and other passengers on a raft rafted her to toss the girl to them. She did.

Another lady had a 6-month-old child. They helped her onto the wing and she didn't want to toss her baby to them, but she finally did after people kept encouraging her to do it.

Dzbanski said the woman initially refused to get off the plane until she had her luggage.

Back on shore, the rescued passengers walked around and shook each other's hands. Some embraced. Nearly all were strangers, but now they shared a unique camaraderie.

Hours later, passenger Allison Barnes reminded to CNN: "All of the soldiers, all the strangers are didn't know had a common bond." AP, Reuters, AFP with Inquirer Research

Charice featured ...

By Jaime Al

18 at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel, will feature teenage Pinoy singing sensation Charice Pempengco.

On the same day another performance concert featuring an all-star lineup including classical crossover artists Sarah Brightman and rock singer Bono will be held at the Lincoln Memorial. It is said to be the event that the President-elect is expected to attend in its entirety.

Off to US

The Cabuyao, Laguna-born Charice, who is now formally called only by her first name, confirmed her participation in the Obama celebrations in an interview with a news crew of her home network, ABS-CBN, on the day she was to board a flight to Washington.

Oprah's protege

Discovered by the world through the video showing actress Vina Morales, Charice—whose international career is being handled by no less than billionaire media personality Oprah Winfrey—still sing very modern, as requested by Obama's staff. "Until Bless Internet" and "One Moment in Time"—the latter originally performed by pop superstar Whitney Houston.

It was Winfrey, an ardent supporter of Obama's presidential campaign, who reportedly lobbied to have Charice included in the pre-inaugural program.

Although Charice made her debut TV appearance in the US on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" in December 2007, it was a guest spot on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" in May 2008 where she was featured in a special segment dubbed "The World's Greatest Kids." In that segment, Charice sang another Houston hit, "I Have Nothing."

Four months later, Charice returned as a guest in another special segment, "Dreams Come True," on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." Charice's performance drew Celine Dion's praise. "Wow, Wow, Wow!" Dion said. "I was really extra special because I had the renowned Canadian songwriter-producer David Foster on the ground."

THE PHENOMENON Makena and wondering, Charice Pempengco rises to fame in the US as a singing sensation with no less than Oprah as her sponsor/ mentor/manager. Now, she's becoming a footnote in history as the first Filipino to sing in an inaugural event for an American president.

Foster said he was impressed with Charice's "World's most talented girl"

In the same show, host Winfrey described Charice in glowing terms as "the most talented girl on the world."

From then on, it has been a dizzying ride in music for everyone in which Charice—guided by Winfrey's influential close-knit circle of members of high-profile events: a rare duet with Boys at the Inter's Madison Square Garden concert which reportedly invited members in the New York Times; a spot number of Andrea Bocelli's "Vivere Time for Children" benefit concert in Las Vegas; a performance at the annual Carousel of Hope Ball 2008 in Beverly Hills, California; for the benefit of children with diabetes; another guest spot at the David Foster & Friends Chair Gala in Concert at Alberta, Canada; and an appearance at Mary's 100 Years Anniversary Celebration in New York City among others.

With music greats

Invariably, Charice has been in the company of music greats. Besides Foster, Bocelli, Michael Bolton, Josh Groban, Dion, Katherine McPhee, Blake Shelton, Kenny G, Peter Cetera and Brian McKnight.

Charice's management still is another matter altogether.

In a statement released just six weeks Thursday night, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was closely cooperating with Philippine authorities for the safe release of Bagni, 62.

"It was also be learned that an Italian citizen, Eugenio Vagni, has been kidnapped in the Philippines, Foreign Minister Franco Frattini activated the Ministry's Crisis Unit and the Italian Embassy in Manila," the statement said.

The Philippine National Police, through its spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, said it was ready to provide security to aid workers, "once requested."

Volunteers didn't request security

"Maybe the Red Cross volunteers did not request security because they don't see any need that there is a threat to their lives, for more humanitarian workers... Because supposedly, they should not be targeted and given due respect considering their work," Bataoil said.

Operatives of the elite PNP Special Action Force and the Regional Mobile Group are taking part in the hunt for the abductors, he said. With reports from Jocelyn R. Uy, Christine O. Avendaño, Kristine L. Alave and Tara Quimomanda in Manila

FACTBOX

Bird hit Wright's plane

NEW YORK—AVIATION (U) Hostiles are investigating whether a flock of geese was responsible for bringing down a jet carrying more than 150 people in New York on Thursday.

The following are some facts about the dangers birds pose to aviation:

- Damage by birds and other wildlife striking aircraft annually amounts to well over $500 million for US civil and military aviation and over 219 people have been killed worldwide as a result of wildlife strikes since 1988.
- Birds have posed a danger at long as people have been flying. The first recorded bird strike was by Orville Wright, who struck a bird in his flimsy craft his plane hit a bird, probably a red-winged blackbird, over Ohio in September 1905.
- Birds are not the only wildlife problem for aircraft but they do account for 97 percent of wildlife strikes. Other animals that have hit planes during take-off or landing include deer, coyotes, bats and alligators.
- Waterfowl (31 percent), gulls (26 percent), and raptors (18 percent) represented three quarters of the reported bird and wildlife strikes causing damage to US civil aircraft, 1990-2007.

Airports near water

- Over 750 bird aircraft collisions with deer and 200 collisions with coyotes were reported in the United States, 1990-2007.
- Birds are a particularly serious hazard at airports near water. New York's LaGuardia airport, where the plane in Thursday's accident took off, has two runways stretching more than a mile into Jamaica Bay, a prime feeding ground for birds. Runways are usually built on land that is thought to become resistant, or even eroded by the noise from them.

Sources: Federal Aviation Administration and the Bird Strike Committee which includes FAA, airlines and agriculture representatives from affiliates—http://www.birdstrike.org/ Reuters

Puno on Palace run: I'll consult 'moral force,' my 'apos'

2 lawmakers say Puno 'qualified'

PUNO: "They are my constituents."

To see page A2

AT LEAST TWO CONGRESSmen are warm to the idea of Chief Justice Reynato Puno seeking the presidency.

Both Pangalanan Rep. Bello Cielo and Nueva Ecija Rep. Edwardo Nonato Joson pronounced Puno "qualified" for the post.

But Cielo said Puno needed to "improve on his political savvy to win mass support" and to gain "a good understanding of the economy, security issues and codes, environment, poverty and science and technology."

And Joson said that "even as an alternative candidate, Puno will [need] a political machinery and funds to back his candidacy."

Cielo, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who is known to be a contender for the presidency said he was willing to give way to Puno because the latter could be "the person that moral forces are looking for as a leader of the nation."

'Only to Puno'

In interviews with reporters and radio stations early yesterday, Lacson made it clear that he would defer only to the Chief Justice and not to any other presidential contender.

"I am not in a position to consider him to run, [but] if and when he decides to run, I'm willing to defer to him and only to him," Lacson said.

The senator said it was Puno's "call and decision" when asked to comment on the latest statement that politics was farthest from his mind. (See story on Page A1.)

He said his decision on Thursday to throw his hat support behind the Chief Justice "should be decide to lead the country" was not ambiguous.

Lacson denied that he was announcing that Puno should also serve as head of a "caretaker government," as suggested earlier by critics of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I can't understand. How can there be a caretaker government if Mrs. Arroyo is still there until 2010?" Lacson said.

"And my announcement was clear that I will set aside my own ambition: because I love our country. When I believe in something, I say it unequivocally and I will see my ambition, he would pursue his plan to run for president.

"Hindi ho kasi ito given a setup. Bought. I'm my own instrument, I gave it subdivers. Pano'[will] have to pursue my own plans for 2010—unless he changes his decision at some point before the filing of the certificate of candidacy," Lacson said.

Justices all-out support

Amid talk of the planned impeachment of Puno, justices of the Court of Appeals and members of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) yesterday expressed all-out support for him.

"We hereby declare our high esteem and full support for the honorable Chief Justice because we know him to never with utmost devotion to duty, integrity, decency and unbending desire to bring meaningful reforms," the justices of the appellate court said in a resolution.

Presiding Justice Conrado Vasquez led 51 justices in signing the resolution and in presenting it to Puno after the latter's session in the Supreme Court Associate Justice Diosdado Peralta.

"It is our fervent hope that the judiciary and its members, particularly the honorable Chief Justice, be shielded from politics to allow them to discharge their function duty to dispense justice without fear or favor," the justices said.

The IBP on the other hand, took out a half-page ad in the Inquirer that carried a statement signed by its national president Feliciano Bautista and eight regional governors.

"The IBP hopes that the ongoing rumors relating to Chief Justice Puno's impendorous would remain just that—rumors," the IBP said.

Like the plague

"The mere invitds politics and political talk like the plague, and this has served the highest court well. To those who may be intent on unjustly and maliciously targeting the Chief Justice and the Supreme Court, try to consider whatever is left of your conscience," it said. Reports from GE C. Cahiwangan Jr., Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

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Globe Telecom welcomes the New Year with a 3-day Phone Sale at the Globe Activity Center in Makati from 09-16 January 2009. With the best deals ever from Globe, this is the easiest time to get Connected 24-seven!

Prepaid phonekits will be on sale for as low as P850. Subscribers who buy two to five phonekits are given even bigger discounts. Plus, you can get P100 bonus load for every purchase of a Nokia phoneKit. One can also get free speakers worth P500 for every purchase of a myGlobe/Bot phoneKit.

If a Globe Plan is what you're interested in, you can get a free Samsung M150 cellphone, a Samsung 7.2MP camera and speakers when you subscribe to Globe's Unlimited Text Plan 1080. For every subscription to Globe's Plan 999 bundled with a Load Allowance Plan 500, you can get a free Samsung M150 cellphone, a Samsung W800 cellphone, a Samsung 7.2MP camera and speakers.

At the sale, Globe subscribers can enjoy our Globe's great services such as GCash, Globe Broadband, Visibility and Yehey! credSearch for free.

The sale is open from 10 am to 6 pm. Cash and credit card payments are accepted.

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OPINION

Doing an Illinois

EDITORIAL

IT IS EASY TO SEE THE UNEASY PARALLELISMS between the vote of the Illinois House of Representatives to impeach Gov. Rod Blagojevich and the by-now annual decision of the Philippine House of Representatives to throw out the impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

First, of course, is that while there's more than prima facie evidence on both cases of culpable violations of the constitution and high crimes, the Illinois and Filipino lawmakers differ in their respective decisions: the Illinois lower house members have decided that Blagojevich should stand trial for attempting to sell the US Senate seat vacated by President-elect Barack Obama while their Filipino counterparts have turned a blind eye on the impeachment complaint and refused to deliver the complaint to the Senate.

Second is the disparate treatment of the charter of the two chambers: while Illinois lawmakers, in voting for the impeachment, show their solemn regard for their constitution and thereby their faith in American democracy and its system of laws, Filipino lawmakers have nothing but contempt for the Constitution.

Third is by impeaching or indicting Blagojevich, the Illinois lawmakers give their embattled governor a chance to either resign and make a graceful exit or defend himself formally and publicly, as befits an authentic democratic system of laws. In contrast, by shielding the President, our lawmakers don't give her her day in court; they let her bury her very real or a difficult situation by berating (whose chief beneficiaries are the congressmen themselves), influence-peddling in government and the military (say goodbye to a professional AFP), and generally doing a demolition job on our nation. The Illinois system is a democracy, ours is a mockery.

The series of painful parallelisms starts with how either official had been caught, like a fish that one catches through its mouth: a legal wiretap in the case of Blagojevich, an illegal one of Mr Arroyo's conversation with an election official at the height of the canvassing of the 2004 election. Although Illinois and Manila are scandal-ridden places, both cases indicate a new low in political mendacity. In the case of Blagojevich, FBI agents had wiretapped phone calls to and from the governor's house. Even before the November election of Obama, the tapes reportedly showed Blagojevich spelling out the criteria for choosing the replacement: "our legal situation, our personal situation, our political situation," referring to his family's financial woes and his intention to appoint someone who could help him secure a post in the Obama administration.

In another tape, the disgraced governor sounded nervously, abnormally frustrated. Pity and spleen about the outcome that had fallen on him to choose Obama's successor. At one point, he likened the procedure to a sports agent shopping around a free agent for the cheapest price. At one time he even weighed aloud appointing himself to the job.

The expletive-prone speech of the governor contrasts with his loftily literary denial of wrongdoing and profession of innocence. Proclaiming a fondness for British poetry, he quotes Kipling and Tennyson. When he was impeached, he surrounded himself with poor people whom he claimed to have helped, and declared, "I am going to fight every step of the way" ending with the last line of Tennyson's Ulysses poem: "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Mr Arroyo is capable of the same bizarre political theater although her attempts at literary profundity are laughable. But she's a more wily politician than Blagojevich or worse than her critics and enemies would admit. And part of that dexterity owes to the politics-as-usual attitude of our lawmakers and politicians who would sell their vote to the highest bidder.

Perhaps the starkest parallelism—or difference—between Illinois and the Philippines is that while the Illinois lower house voted 114-1 to impeach Blagojevich (only 60 were needed for the action to pass), Philippine lawmakers never even bother to explain how they could keep peace with their conscience despite obviously selling it to the devil. Our politicians are tired of telling an impeachment is a numbers game, which is like saying their conscience is clean but for a price. When Obama won last November, many Filipino politicians boasted they would do an Obama. What they should do is an Illinois.

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Morality in fragments

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE OTHER DAY, SUPREME COURT CHIEF Justice Reynato Puno joked that nation-wide disinfestation for the effects of the unfunded national treasury's problems do not lie within the legal system but with the moral system. Our society, he was quoted as saying, has "too many laws but [is] lacking in morality." Confronted with daily reports of corruption in nearly every sphere of our country, I think it is easy to agree with Chief Justice Puno's assessment. However, it leaves a slightly different view of the national situation.

When our society was small and simple, the requirements of morality were pretty straightforward. We took our cues from our parents, teachers, religious leaders, and cultural traditions. But things changed dramatically in just the last 50 years. There are more of us today. Our experiences are more varied than those of the generations before us. There is today greater diversity among our people in beliefs and values. We can no longer assume that a general moral code can be applied with equal clarity to the different social spheres in which we participate.

This is far from saying that morality is passé. We still have notions of right and wrong, or good and evil. But, as our society undergoes differentiation, we begin to define what is right with reference to specific institutional areas. Thus, instead of an encompassing moral meta-code, we speak of morality in the family, morality in politics, morality in business, morality in law, etc. Modern societies draw specific ethical codes of values relevant to particular institutions or spheres of activity, instead of defining general moral principles valid for all situations. Indeed, in such societies, there is an aversion to the use of moral judgments in functional settings. Thus a criminal offender may be pronounced guilty, but not immoral or evil.

Philosophers and students of modern societies view the increasing replacement of moral precepts with ethical codes to be a feature of modernity. But they do not always agree whether this is good or bad. Zygmunt Bauman laments it as the erosion of moral responsibility. The freedom with ethical rules, he says, strips human action of its moral dimension. It encourages people to surrender the rules, assured their source is secure, and forget the moral ends they are supposed to serve. To be moral, he said, does not mean always choosing the good over the bad. It means, rather, being conscious of the moral aspect in every action, and having up to the challenge of moral dilemmas.

In contrast, Niklas Luhmann says that the unsubscribing of an all-embracing moral system is an inescapable feature of modern functionally-differentiated societies. Its consequences are often felt in the form of a moral crisis. A moral crisis may sometimes prompt a need to return to pre-modern practices, such as turning to a natural moral watchtower to re-integrate a fragmented society. For Luhmann, this is a step backward, an attempt to apply archaic solutions to the problems of a complex society.

Recognizing the gravity of the moral crisis, the Chief Justice declared it was "time for the moral leaders of the country to marshal their resolve." But who are these moral heroes? I don't think this was a call to specific institutions like the churches and the schools. I believe he meant, more precisely, the recovery and strengthening of the moral dimensions in the different areas of our collective life.

The Chief Justice said "the country needs leaders with moral character." I think it would be simplistic to interpret this as a call to draft moral educators like religious ministers to public office. Surely, they don't have a monopoly on morality. I believe rather that it is a call to heed the moral voices in whatever sphere of life we find ourselves, to take time to figure out the dilemma it poses, instead of dismissing it as irrelevant. This, we will find, is not going to be easy as we strive to preserve the functional independence of the institutions we need to build autonomy in a complex society.

The point I am making is more than a question of interpretation. It has to do with how we should act to achieve a re-integration of our society, while making sure that no single class or sector is allowed to undermine the autonomy and integrity of our institutions. "If we lose the independence of the judiciary," Chief Justice Puno said, "democracy could die." We can say the same thing of the presidency, the legislature, the civil service...the mass media, and so-called of politics itself, etc.

Looking at the matter more closely, we will find that in our society the threat to the autonomous functioning of institutions comes mainly from the traditional habit of our leaders to extend their power and influence beyond their offices. That is at the root of bishops' and businessmen's evil is true of politicians. It is as pervasive among civil leaders as it is among our people. The failure or refusal to differentiate, to respect boundaries, lies finally at the root of our national problems.

The problem of moral integration in modern society cannot be addressed by attempting to restore a general moral system. To do so would be to restrict the human-kind order of traditional society, with all its excesses. Thus, if the Church seeks to "moralize" politics or business, it has little choice but to proceed from a recognition of the differentiation of institutional spheres. It must do so by supporting the active engagement of the laity in politics and business, rather than by directly intervening in these spheres.

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Losing the war on corruption

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL'S CORRUPTION Perception Index (CPI) and the World Bank's Control of Corruption Indicator (CCI) is one of six dimensions in its World Governance Index) estimate levels of corruption in a country based on several public and surveys conducted by various organizations, and including the Global Competitiveness Index and the Quarry Index as inputs. The respondents for each country are both local and foreign business persons as well as country analysts.

Shortcomings of the two indices have been pointed out in the literature. One of them is that they are based in systematic ways...which is sensibly means that the relationship between actual corruption experience and the perceptions of corruption may be weak. Other flaws are that the indices may better capture differences among countries with low levels of corruption than among highly corrupt ones; that holding expenditure constant, education, age, income and employment status affect corruption perceptions. To top it all, it has been pointed out that they may not lend themselves well to comparisons across countries and over time. All these aside from the fact that there is the problem of how corruption is defined (e.g., what is a bribe to one may be considered a tip by another).

But such and all, they are the only available measures we have; there is no country in which precise information on the actual level of corruption is available, and given its nature (nobody gives or gets receipts for bribes given or received), it will never be available. Moreover, so long as we use them with caution, the flaws will give us some indication of how we compare with other countries in the fight against corruption, and how we have performed in our own fight over time. And the flaws may at least help to outline our resolve to fight the scourge, whose errant and senseless (the worst effects are left to an unpredictable universe) acts have broken any pact the fight between sin not certain to get anything to retaliate) have negative impacts on investments, economic growth, and human development.

Aside from the CPI and the CCI, which measure perceptions mostly by business people, there is another source of information about corruption in a country: Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer (GCB). This time the respondents are the general public, who are asked, among other things, the extent to which they believe corruption pervades public institutions, and their own experience with petty bribery.

In addition, there are also surveys, such as those conducted by the Social Weather Stations, in one of which the opinions of lawyers and judges were asked about the extent of corruption in the criminal justice system (see my column last week), and in another, businessmen are asked about their bribe-paying experiences.

The bottom line is that using the data sets together may give us a dossier, or at least more accurate picture than that provided by individual indices. It is for us to cross those like different parts of a puzzle.

From the CPI, which has been published since 1995, what we see is that measured on a scale of zero (perceived highly corrupt) to 10 (perceived highly clean), the good news is that we are not last or almost last. Between 159 countries included in the CPI, and nine out of 10 developing countries, have scores below 5, and the Philippines is in the group. The bad news is that our CPI scores are not going up (which would show improvement in the fight against corruption), but down. Between 1995 and 2008, the Philippines' CPI has ranged from a high of 3.4 (1999) to a low of 2.3 (2008), with the biggest deterioration in scores occurring between 1999 and 2000 (Estrada regime), when our CPI went down from 3.4 to 2.8. In 2001, when the Arroyo presidency began, our CPI was 2.9. It dropped to 2.6 the next year, and hovered between 2.5 and 2.6 since then until last year, when it dropped to 2.3.

Among the countries Countries that had the same or lower scores when the measurements began...Mexico, China, Thailand, even Vietnam...now have higher scores than ours. In 1998, we were in the 40th percentile (where 100th percentile means perceived most highly corrupt). Ten years later, we deteriorated to the 78th percentile, which means that other countries have done much better in fighting corruption.

The picture given by the CPI is reinforced by the World Bank's CCI. In 1996, the Philippines was in the 45th percentile (48th, time, 1996's percentile shows best corruption), while in 2007, the most recent data, we were down to the 22nd percentile. It is safe to say that we have been losing the fight against corruption.

The GCB adds another variable to our corruption profile. Its latest (2007) report shows that in the Philippines, 32 percent of the people surveyed reported that they had to pay a bribe to obtain services, which puts the Philippines in the top quintile or 20 percent of countries as far as bribe-paying is concerned (this may make one feel better, but in Cambodia, 71 percent of respondents reported that they had to pay bribes to obtain a service). By the way, on a global scale, the largest share of bribes paid by respondents went to the police, the second largest to the judiciary.

What is clear is that the general public in the Philippines perceives (as do the surveys most affected by corruption? On a scale of 1 (not at all corrupt) to 5 (extremely corrupt), the results were: police (3.6), city councils followed by the legislature (3.3) and political parties (3.4). The "legal system" was a "mere" 3.0.

Which puts the Alabang Boys investigation in an interesting light. A case of the one right investigating the corrupt?

The big picture

FROM THE GREAT MANY BITS OF DATA PRsented in the 2006 Annual Survey Results last Tuesday, it is more important to focus in on the big picture than to single out the newest 2006 media release, which happened to be on the people's nominations of candidates to contest the presidency in 2010.

Despite the terms of their economic agency, nothing tops the 2007 poverty of households who responded, in the December 2006 survey, that they had suffered involuntary hunger in the previous three months. This must be accepted as their actual suffering; it cannot be dismissed off as "perceived" or even temporary in absolute terms, as an estimated 3.3 million households suffered hunger moderately (only once or a few times), and 940,000 suffered it severely (often or always).

The hunger situation is much more serious now than it was 12 months ago. And we must, the government says in a flurry to support at least one million tons of rice. Is it going to rely on rice importation again, or will it rely solely on its new conditional cash transfer program, which has a target of 640,000 households this year? If the government is serious about feeding its people, it will at least better targeting of its rice distribution to the hungry than in past years?

This year the sense of urgency is missing. It seems that the only members our economic managers are worried about are the stock market makers. But the stock market affects the fortunes of an extremely thin slice of the Philippine population. The global recession is becoming an occasion for cutting away from the problems of the poor in order to find solutions for the problems of the rich.

In 2008, the Philippines' first quarter was from below as poor spilled up to 70 percent in the second quarter, and then came down to 53 percent to both the third and fourth quarters. Actually, the annual average percentage for the "food poor" has stayed at that 53 percent. We're during the poor this year—because the dragon economy has become worse—first, because those who are not really poor but also hungry have increased; and second, because poor people's standards of what it takes to escape poverty have been falling in real terms. Therefore our economic managers should be increasingly worried about poverty.

Quarter change. In terms of sheer non-economic suffering, nothing tops the plan of the House of Representatives, when it re-opens on Monday, to proceed with its efforts to amend the Constitution, one way or another, so that President Macapagal-Arroyo can legally stay on for the nation's third official term after the middle of 2010.

Such efforts are a complete waste of time. It is a crystal clear from the opinion polls of 2008 that proposals to extend the terms of office of the present Congress and of the president will be greeted by a fast majority of the electorate as the political equivalent of a root canal operation. The political opposition is becoming an occasion for cutting away from the problems of the poor in order to find solutions for the problems of the rich.

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In addition, there is the constitutional problem that such a move would make a mockery of the 1987 Constitution. Whatever else it is, the Constitution is a social contract between the people and their elected representatives. It is not a document that can be changed at the whim of the latter.

Finally, there is the matter of fact. GMA has been consistently unpopular all throughout the past four years, all the more will the electorate refuse to extend her term by means of a constitutional amendment.

Because of the unpopularity of GMA—unpopularity in that all 13 Presidential Survey '06 Study contains a clear suggestion that it will not be difficult for her nominees to win the 2010 presidential election as it was for John McCain to win the last US election.

The race in 2010. By chance, 1992 does not have its own acronym to take the candidates for president in 2010 should be. Its open-ended answer question is who would make good (regarding) commanders-in-Chief is literally upside into who the people would most like to see as candidates. It is not up to the people to nominate candidates, since the respondents may nominate up to three names. This approach gives all aspirants a chance of being nominated, to those who get such answers.

A big picture on 2010 is obtained by looking at the same range of answers in the question, rather than by homing in only the leading answers. The latter is the reporting style in the past presidents' elections of reporting only the top two presidents will be more by guessing who will be the candidates. For instance, although Agnes Binay and Bayani Fernando have both declared that they are running for president, they might well withdraw, if their survey standings are unchanged by say September.

Meanwhile, perhaps, would like to become 100% candidate; but how likely is it for GMA to adopt him, if his chances of winning are so low? Perhaps GMA would bid more confident by identifying Bob de Castro, who after all became vice president on the basis of only 13% support in the 1992 election. But he is confident of staying ahead in the survey race if the voters associate him very closely with GMA?

Corruption is the public system. To complete the big picture, let me call attention to last year's tremendous backsliding in the matter of government corruption, according to the 2008 Global Survey of Enterprises. The most convincing evidence is from the reports of managers that they themselves were asked for bribes by someone in government during the last 12 months. Again, these are not "perceptions."

Between 2007 and 2008, managers were asked the same kind of bribe in connection with a transaction with government. Almost half were solicited in connection with getting a local government license, getting a national government license, or getting an import license. In North Manila, in particular, the percentage asked for a bribe regarding their income taxes had already fallen slowly from 52 in 2000 to 34 in 2007, but it zoomed back up to 55 in 2008. The picture isn't pretty, but it needs to be known.

* * *

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Can business 'do good' in bad times?

ALTHOUGH A BUZZWORD FOR BUSINESS since the 1990s, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility is quite difficult to pin down and there is no universally accepted definition. Many see CSR as a way for businesses to give back to the community and to contribute to social development goals. One traditional understanding of CSR focuses on compliance with the regulatory framework. However, some businesses are beginning to realize that CSR can also be used to win the approval of those publics and secure the "social license to operate." It has become increasingly clear that businesses do not operate in a vacuum and that they will be held accountable for their impact on the communities they work with, and increasingly on the environment.

It should not be difficult to talk of "giving back" when business is thriving. It is easy to "do good" when business is good. The challenge today is for businesses to stand by its mandate even during the tough times.

Businesses are with limited resources are hard-pressed to meet the needs of their constituents. Where public institutions are weak and inefficient, people expect the private sector, and, increasingly, business groups, to bridge the gap. The most feared of socially responsible companies are among a few who refuse to participate in creating rules for society, and set requirements of positive social change. If corporations are serious about being "good neighbors" and good corporate citizens, now is the time for them to walk their talk and deliver on their promises.

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COMMENTARY

Muriel Q. de Jesus

communities and stakeholders. It has sought to develop better strategies and greater coherence in its practice of CSR, according to Nestlé—called the Ayala Social Institutes—that is grounded in the corporate values of commitment to nation building and concern for others.

The Ayala Social Institutes guides the group in designing and implementing programs that respond to the needs of the country and society, programs that are sustainable, responsive to these critical development issues—education, environment and entrepreneurship—this framework sets the direction for the group to harness its strengths and resources to empower the people, and the one land and enable a strong, innovative economy.

The Ayala commitment to nation building drives many of its CSR programs, and it is one of the reasons education is high on the agenda of the Ayala Social Institutes. The group believes that investing in education of the youth will not only pave the way for them to be more employable, but also to participate in the global world, but will also empower them to create better futures for themselves and their families. By focusing on the public school system—where almost 90 percent of Filipino youth are enrolled—the group seeks to achieve greater social impact and scale.

The crisis in education—poor grasp of basic skills, low scores in achievement tests, and school dropouts—cannot be solved by one group alone. Today's new brand of CSR is not about one-upmanship, but about collaborating to respond to today's most urgent development issues. The Ayala group supports consortium projects that bring like-minded organizations together, bringing a wide range of skills, resources and expertise, in order to come up with solutions that work. Examples of this collaborative approach are the Gawad Kalinga movement and Access for Students (I.E.A.S) and Net25Tech consortium projects, which show how technology can boost the public school system. Ayala also supports the IT 33 Consortium, which seeks to reverse the education crisis by emphasizing community involvement and local government support.

Many still have apprehensions about what more might be big, but watch and wait, wondering whether the economy will simply bounce back, or whether last year was only the beginning of the downswing. Business groups are wary, and many are taking a "wait and see" attitude. Companies are hurting, and others are hedging their bets and playing it safe.

While some critique CSR as mere marketing or public relations ploys, some companies have taken CSR to heart, incorporating the principles of CSR into their corporate vision and values, and finding ways to integrate these into their business operations. Some corporations take the long-term view when it comes to CSR. Recognizing that it takes time for investments in social development to bear fruit, these companies bank on the long-term. Time: doing good business is the right thing to do.

The financial crisis will test the commitment of business to CSR. But it also presents great opportunities for growth, because it is now, during the tough times, when it matters most for business to continue to adapt, do things differently, do things better. The business community must find ways to respond to the times, and go beyond "business—and CSR—as usual."

Muriel Q. de Jesus is senior development specialist at Ayala Foundation's Center for Social Technologies.

The climate change safari park

COPENHAGEN—AS BARACK OBAMA PREPARES for his inauguration, it is worth contemplating a passage from his book "Dreams from My Father." It reveals a lot about the way we view the world's problems.

Obama is in Kenya and wants to go on a safari. His half-brother, Mark Ondoro, is against the idea, saying like a true colonialist: "Why should all that land be set aside for tourists when it could be used for farming? Those warthogs eat more about one dead elephant than they do for a hundred black subsistence." Although the safari ap going on safari, Obama has no intention to be spoiled by it.

That anecdote has parallels with the current preoccupation with global warming. Many people, including America's new president, believe that global warming is the preeminent issue of our time. And that cutting CO2 emissions is one of the most virtuous things we can do.

To stretch the metaphor a little, this seems like building ever larger safari parks instead of investing more time to feed the hungry.

Global warming is a global problem, and it is caused by manmade CO2 emissions. The problem is that even global, theoretical, and hugely costly CO2 reductions will have virtually no impact on the temperature by mid-century (indeed of ineffective and costly measures we should focus much more on real climate problems as dramatic increases in DALYs for non-carbon energy, which would let the climate to overload emissions a few not. But, more importantly for most of the planet's citizens, global warming simply exacerbates existing problems—problems that we can and should solve today.

WORLD VIEW

Bjorn Lomborg

Consider malaria. Models show global warming will increase the incidence of malaria by about 3 percent by the end of the century, because mosquitoes are more likely to survive when the world gets hotter. But malaria could be almost totally wiped out by better infrastructure and general wealth that it is to temperature. Rich people rarely contract malaria or die from it, poor people do.

Slowing carbon cuts could avert about 0.2 percent of the malaria deaths. But we could cut malaria deaths by far more than that—by 25 percent—if we focused instead on proven low-cost measures like indoor residual spraying with DDT, insecticide-treated bednets, and cheap artemisinin-based combination therapies. Yet, because the climate change safari park is so much trendier, we spend 19 times more money on climate change than on malaria.

Obama's election has caused hopes for a massive commitment to carbon cuts and vast spending on renewable energy in area the world, especially developing nations. As Obama's Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, said in her confirmation hearing: "Our failure to act on climate change will be measured by future generations." Similarly, Obama's science adviser, John Holdren, has said that "the scientific consensus is that we have only a few years to get started" on cutting CO2.

This alone will probably cost more than 1 percent of GDP. Even if the entire world followed suit, the effect of their would be to reduce global temperatures by one-twentieth of one degree Fahrenheit by the end of the century. The cost could be a staggering $10 trillion.

Seriously but subsidized solar panels, as some hope Obama will do, are simply insane. Even if the panels were free—as they are not—the incredible investment in sun and heat greater than climate models demonstrate that Germany's $16.6 billion expense will do very nothing by last one hour at the end of the century. Not one billionth of that cost—we could provide essential health care to every person in the developing world.

Even if we invested $1.3 billion per people, thereby preventing perhaps a million deaths and slashing half the world's population mentally and physically much stronger. Again and again, we narrow-choose the dubious luxury of modest relief, and pass over the obvious luxury of massive relief.

New economic models show that the total damage imposed by global warming by the end of the century will be about 3 percent of GDP. This is not trivial, but neither is it the end of the world. By the end of the century, we will be richer than we are by the average person to be $1,400 per year rich, or than today.

Yet Africa safari trip since confronted America's new president with a question he could not answer: why the rich world prioritized elephants over people. Why we would prefer to spend trillions on solar will richer nations spend obscene amounts of money on climate change, achieving next to nothing in 100 years, when we could do so much good for mankind today for much less money? The world will be searching to hear Obama's answer.

Project Syndicate

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Down Avenue Q

I LIVED ONLY TWO DAYS ON AVENUE Q. And unfortunately very existence is at stake. I do not intend to do it very again.

The details are rather sketchy: I think I was 3 or 4 years old, and I was in school. I vaguely remember my reason for allowing my list to go through the air like an 8-wing fighter. I was being taunted without letup by a classmate and I really hated it. My tormentor was and naturally stronger than me. Perhaps at some point, the taunting got really worse. I found myself running to my homeroom teacher with tears in big as teacher's fingers. Being off my cheeks, I yielded to my anger and decided to deal with him myself. I was 3 years old. I summoned all my strength and released my first punch like a rocket missile, a jab which my boxing teacher in college would later say was better than the punches thrown by some of the guys in our PE class.

If I stopped with the circumstances behind the fight, I do sincerely and categorically remember the feeling of my hand and knuckles landing on a wad of tissue. Soft, blood vessels and bone. The illusion of "Eye of the Tiger" pinning in my head came to an abrupt stop. I am not sure if it gave a pleasant feeling to actually hit someone, even if he were a boy who perhaps deserved it because he derived great pleasure in making me his attitude to kindergarten preschools. It was actually exhilarating. And the dizzying feeling did not end with that. It felt even worse to realize that even if the punch left my knuckles stinging, my opponent was still leaning before me like the Empire State Building, unblinking, unhurt and obviously unaffected by my pathetic attempt to become Muhammad Ali.

I turned before him, hoping my defiant face was effectively masking my alarm. I mentally calculated how many milk teeth I could lose when he made his counter-attack and tried to console myself that it would save me several trips to the dentist. I waited . . . and waited . . . and waited, but to my great surprise, he simply moved at once backward and then walked away. All the air left my body as I severely banned the biggest sigh of relief my 4-year-old lungs could manage.

On that day, I re-learned one of the earliest lessons my grandfather taught me—by breaking it. He had told me that in any battle, I should not charge head on mindlessly like a bull. I have to choose my opponents wisely and weigh my chances of success in the fight. On that day, at the ripe old age of 4, a 6-year old, I let my emotions rule over my head and successfully missed being beaten to a pulp. I thank that dizziness of mine (wherever he is now) for not taking me up on my false and misplaced bravado, for saving my head and my teeth, and walking away, even if he probably got an endless ribbing from his friends for the rest of the week.

Every day of a person's existence may not always be a walk in the park. And it has been so for me the past couple of years. Mornings find me struggling to get out of bed and dreading what the day will bring. Sometimes, in the course of wrestling, I allow my head to drop on an open book just to catch 10 or 15 minutes of sleep. I am not a fan of Monday, but I sing my eyes and whispering a prayer of thanks for having gone through the day intact. If there is one thing I am thankful for, it is the weekend of my dreams. In my entire lifetime, I have never had dreams as realistic as the ones I have now. I even have dreams even when I am aware that some part of me is still awake.

My may win some of my duels and lose significant ones, too, borne sight of relief one minute and later lick my wounds alone in a dark corner. An old song by Stevie Wonder has been gaining mileage in my MP3 player; a song titled "Used to Be." I particularly love—and hate—one line which goes: "Used to be that I believe only in people's love." I do. I am of things and to be true and I think I need to redefine a lot of terms nowadays.

Life after all the narrative is also all about second chances. People sometimes get so pessimistic that they just focus on the negative aspects of failure, like a black dot on a piece of white paper that gets all their attention. They forget there is a whole piece of white paper with the white space. If it requires taking one step or getting through one 24-hour day at a time to get over the black dot, so be it.

The point is, you shouldn't be like an algae-laced pool's date announcing in a nice warm temperature, nurturing bitterness and anger in the best growth conditions. People may learn different mental reactions for taking a step forward, but giving up going through the effort of a faith in my tool and in the promise that the plans are always better than mine. Behind the seeming carelessness in every dark cloud is the beauty of the silver lining.

I was talking to my best friend at around 1 in the morning a couple of nights ago. We were exchanging thoughts on walking away and letting go. I asked, "Where do you walk away and restore into reverse, 'G,' you know, quitting?" My best friend couldn't even say the word out loud, although as she is on it, just like any other person on this planet.

As I sat by the window, looking at the half-empty street, I came to realize that walking away from a bad situation is actually be as noble as dueling to the death. It is a no-win-win kinds of persons have turned to through the years. The first are quite and stops midway not only because he is paralyzed by his fear of faith and belief in himself but also because he has to salvage some of his pride. The second stops And lets go, not to win, but to lose. He loses because he feels that he believe that his pride is set all it is hyped up to be, it is not something that should hold him back from doing something he might to do. It is something which needs to be lost along the way and trampled upon because it may be the only badge which keeps him from experiencing the endless possibilities of tomorrow and the days after.

Every time my botched attempt to start a fistfight in the schoolyard, the years have taught me that the best and most memorable battles are the ones that are not only worth fighting for but also the ones fought really well.

Anda Rose E. Villanueva, 23, is a student of the University of the Philippines College of Law.

Young Blood

Anda Rose E. Villanueva

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their concerns? What are their solutions? We welcome contributions from the [illegible]

Notice to Youngblood contributors:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the company you're working for and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Impeach Puno or GMA?

LETTERS

IMAGE ATTACHED THIS IS HOW I DO, as the plot to impeach Chief Justice Reynato Puno.

I cannot really understand why the government has the tendency to raise the good ones in government while it would rather put or keep the wicked ones in power. The plot to impeach the Chief Justice betrays most starkly the arrogance and double-standard of the Arroyo administration and its allies.

If congressmen can claim that impeaching Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is not timely and is just a "nonstarter crime," can't the same argument apply to Chief Justice Puno's case?

But if we ask people, who between GMA and Puno deserves to be impeached, the answer is an instant no brainer.

Impeachment may be a "toothless game," but might is not always right. So—

(number what happened) to those who spearheaded the attempt to impeach then Chief Justice Hilario Davide? Most of them were not reelected. Those who are seeking the ouster of Chief Justice Puno do not deserve another term.

—EDSON "BOBBY" BERMUDO, pinoy.politico@gmail.com

Speedy resolution of 'Alabang Boys' bribery case urged

WE WRITE TO EXPRESS OUR concern about the proliferation of illegal drugs in our country.

We deplore the allegedly stop-and-go sort of Department of Justice officials and prosecutors in the case of the "Alabang Boys."

We declare our full support for Maj. Archimedes Mariano of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) for exposing these DOJ officials and prosecutors. We praise his integrity and his courage to uphold the truth.

We would also like to know how President Macapagal-Arroyo, under her the concerned DOJ officials and prosecutors to go an knee will advance the investigation.

We urge Mr. Arroyo to facilitate the speedy resolution of this case so that those who are guilty will be made to answer for their crimes—for the sake of the Filipino youth and our country.

—THE SEMINARY SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY (IHM), steveasunday@yahoo.com

Landowner asks kin to give up family 'hacienda' to CARP

A FARMER finds company in man's best friend

OUR EXTENDED FAMILY—through a family corporation, Hacienda Inc.—owns a 56-hectare hacienda in Negros. As a firm believer of land reform, I recently e-mailed my cousins and other relatives (some are even based abroad) who co-own the land, asking them to voluntarily offer the property for land reform coverage. I hope my e-mail will touch their hearts and minds and convince them to do so. As one who have already accepted their bondage and existence as landless farmers. This is common to what I told them.

In the final weeks of December 2008, a number of news stories in Philippine media centered on the issue of whether or not the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) of the Philippines should be extended as it is still seen as unsuccessful or corrupted altogether. The issue particularly pitted the farmers against the government (more particularly the Department of Agrarian Reform) and Congress.

The members of our family who live or were based abroad might feel that the issue does not concern them anymore. But the fact is our family still owns Hacienda Ina, Ina, a 56-hectare sugarcane plantation.

It's almost 100-years-since our great-grandparents acquired the plantation. Some of the workers in the hacienda are the great-grandchildren, grandchildren and children of the workers who had worked for our great-grandparents, grandparents and for the time they till but do not own. I call this "generational poverty bondage" where those who till the land are stuck in poverty with their dream of freedom from poverty for their own children and grandchildren.

Ironically this is the same dream that we—especially those among us who have migrated—have for our own children: that they live a much better life. We are partners, therefore, no different from the workers of our hacienda, who are also parents.

In 2007, my mother commissioned a study by the distinguished Fr. John J. Carroll Institute on Church and Social Issues. The study covered three successful farmers' cooperatives in Negros, which helped improve the lives of the farmer workers. The study showed a very obvious reason for the "competitive" success: a P40,000 increase going to a landowner was not enough for his family's basic needs and wouldn't last a week; but P40,000 to the hands of farmers allowed them to purchase not only their basic needs but also home appliances and even TV sets. This, plus the realization that they were the owners of their own destinies made their hard work fulfilling.

I appeal to my relatives in the name of social justice, give the land to the tillers. Let's be big them. With all the blessings we now enjoy as a family, let's express our gratitude to God by following what the Church has been teaching and help the workers in our hacienda.

Let us make 2009 a happy and socially relevant year for our family and for those who have worked for us for generations.

—CESIT ESCOVETE, 133 Lapu-lu, Mandaluyong City

Speedy resolution of 'Alabang Boys' bribery case urged

First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Lumban, Laguna
Tel. Nos. (049)808-4479
Telefax (049)808-5009

INVITATION TO BID

The First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc. with office address at Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna invites all qualified bidders to submit lump sum proposal for the following works in Kena, Laguna:

A. Construction and Supply of Materials for Office Building, Canteen's Quarter and Power House
B. Construction and Supply of Materials for Fencing and Site Development including Backfilling
C. Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 10 MVA Substation Transformer
D. Construction and Supply of Materials for 69kV Feeders 69/13 kV Line

All interested parties can secure bid documents to PBAC Secretariat starting January 16, 2009 after payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5000.00). Submission of sealed bids will be on February 16, 2009 (Tuesday) at 9:00 AM at FLECO Main Office, Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representative.

Request further to include in your sealed bid/proposal the delivery date, terms of payment and availability of stocks for evaluation purposes. The NEA 10(Rev) is either in the form of cash or manager's check, evaluated in two and one half payment (2.5 %) of the total bid price or a surety bond equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Bid bond less than the required amount will be automatically disqualified. Bidder/proponent submitted incomplete specified data and time will not be accepted.

FLECO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) MARY RHODA C. SAAS
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:

(Sgd.) ENGR. EDUARDO R. PAMINTUYAN
PEACTING GENERAL MANAGER

Hamas is like Nazi Germany

THIS IS IN REACTION TO C.M. Phillips' letter (Inquirer, 1/7/09), which was in itself a reaction to the editorial titled "Charity Guns," (Inquirer, 1/2/09 Mon / add to the editors' advice to Phillips that he/she read a history book.

To compare Israel with Nazi Germany is absurd considering that Hamas has much more in common with Nazi Germany. Consider the fact that Hamas' stated goal is not only to demolish and nullify the State of Israel but to eradicate the Jews. Article 7 of the Hamas Charter states: "O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, come on and kill him!" Hamas sends rockets indiscriminately to civilian populations, whose they land, whether on civilian or military targets, as it considers all Jews targets.

Yet, Phillips would regard Israel's attempts toward peace and security as more grievous and worse than its eradicate Israel and Jews as "a strong culture of victimhood." Phillips might remember that in 2005 Israel laid down its settlements set for Gaza and withdrew its forces, but instead of peace ensuing there, greater anarchy resulted in massive smuggling of arms from Egypt to Gaza and in hundreds of rockets fired from Gaza at Southern Israel.

I believe that any sovereign nation in the world in such a situation would respond as Israel has to, or due to pressure its citizens. It's horrifying that innocent Palestinians are dying as a result, and I hope that Israel will be able to stop its offensive soon. But no compare Israel to what Germany is may of the made, given the atrocities by

—JOHN BURLEY, director, Scandinavian Writing Program, University of Iowa, and visiting scholar, SLIS

'Safedrivers' put other Kennon motorists in harm's way

I AM A LOCATION IN THE EDSA/ processing zones of Baguio and Clark. I have been shuttling back and forth between these places every Saturday for the past three years. Last Jan. 10, I experienced the scariest drive of my life.

While driving my Mitsubishi Adventure down Kennon Road when two big lubes overtook me on a blind turn and cut me when they saw a bus on the other lane. This forced me to swerve to the right and luckily I'm a master of all, other wise I would have fallen down into the Camp 6 river. They didn't stop and just continued weaving through the cars on Kennon Road. As I maneuvered my car back on to the road, they inevitably dropping traffic, three other lubes turned me for causing drew to stop. This is when I found out that they were participants in the ICSS Ironman Competition.

When I reached Clark, I saw a lot of big bikes at Orchard Golf. The next day, I inquired from the riders who were running the event and they told me to talk to Tong Sovera, the committee chair of the SMN Motorcycle Club of Safedrivers. When I could not get hold of him, they told me to talk to Joseph Yap, the president, or Gil Sison, the chair. I told the riders what happened to me in Kennon but they told me to forget about it because the SMN Club is backed by prominent officials like Rep. Alfred Romualdez, Chavit Singson and retired police director Reynaldo Berroya from the Luzon Law Enforcement Action Federation.

I went inside to observe their ceremonies and was saddened to know that one participant and a Philippine Army officer in a crash somewhere in Ilocos the previous Saturday.

How on earth were they allowed to race in public streets without taking into consideration public safety? Is present-day Philippine society absolutely false and "palakasan" driven, the answer is obvious.

The race's endless organizers should be jailed.

—JUN ALEVIAR, Clark, Pampanga

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IVA
DOLE Avenue, Brgy. II, Brgy. Palale, Calamba City
Telefax Nos. (049) 545-1650
January 17, 2009

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/entities/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
1. CHANG LEE PRINTING CORPORATION, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Sunghwan Koh Korean	Director
2. KENDO INTERNATIONAL, INC. EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Chang Woo Lee Korean	Coding Manager
3. KIM HONG KUK TRA-DING, INC. Carmona, Cavite	Mr. Kyeongbae Shin Korean	Purchasing Officer
4. HUNTECH INC (PHILS.), INC. EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Wonbo Lee Korean	General Manager
5. ERICH PRESSLER (PHILIPPINES), INC. Area Technology Center Lipa City	Mr. Hiroshi Ikeda/ Japanese	Key Units General Department Assistant Manager
6. FUJIKURO INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Tomohide Morita/ Japanese	Operations Division Advisor
7. FUJIKURO INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Masanori Kajitsu/ Japanese	Quality Assurance Division Advisor
8. HEAVY DUTY PARADISE CORPORATION EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Kazuo Nakamura/ Japanese	Sales Specialist - Japan Trade
9. PHILIPPINE ADVANCED PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY, INC. EPZ, Rosario, Cavite	Mr. Hirokazu Tsumura/ Japanese	Manufacturing Consultant
10. PHILJAY TEXTILE CORPORATION Kiamy, Kiloh, San Juan, Batangas	Mr. Jaganmohan Kumar	Sales Manager
11. EXOMETO PHILIPPINE MANUFACTURING, INC. EPZ, Lot-Area, Sta. Rosa, Laguna	Mr. Wei Qiang Lai/ Malaysian	Engineering Consultant
12. EXOMETO PHILIPPINE MANUFACTURING, INC. EPZ, Lot-Area, Sta. Rosa, Laguna	Mr. Masahiko Shirakabe/ Japanese	Engineering Consultant

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned applications please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO B. MARTINEZ JR., CESO III
Regional Director

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue
Sta. Cruz, Manila, Philippines
Tel. No. 711-6002/731-9503

November 20, 2008

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2008-0026-A

SUBJECT: Amendment to the Administrative Order No. 2008-0026 on Addendum to the Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9288, Otherwise Known as the "Newborn Screening Act of 2004"

The Additional Rules and Regulations promulgated to fully implement Rule VI Sec. 24 Licensing and Accreditation, Letter e) of Republic Act 9288 otherwise known as "Newborn Screening Act of 2004," is hereby amended to state:

e) The following administrative fines shall be imposed on health facilities that refuse to provide NBS services and/or collect more than the maximum allowed NBS fee:

First offense - warning
Second offense - administrative fine of fifty thousand pesos (P50,000.00)
Third offense - administrative fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00)

As thus amended, all other provisions of Administrative Order No. 2008-0026 dated August 8, 2008, stands in effect. This order shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the official gazette or newspaper of general publication.

HON. FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

Medina not a frat man

I WRITE TO CLARIFY A POINT IN THE front page news article, titled "Convention system' still alive in judiciary," by TJ Burgonio and Norman Bordadora, (Inquirer, 1/8/09).

The article states in part that "Francisco Medina and Burgonio are... Estonians members in the fraternal Order of Utopia." However, I am not, and have never been, a member of the Fraternal Order of Utopia or any other fraternity.

What I remember telling TJ Burgonio during the phone interview on Jan. 7, 2009 was that I joined a non-frat organization called "Toastmaster" at the Ateneo Law School.

—CARLOS MEDINA, ip_medina@yahoo.com

Abortion in RH bill cited

RINA JIMENEZ DAVID WAS SUBSTANTIALLY correct in her Jan. 9 column, "Saving mothers and babies," when she said "... the provision of safe abortion services and the timely and secure response to abortion complications are a legitimate part of reproductive health."

This confirms what pro-lifers have been asserting all along: that the Reproductive Health Do it Still pursue now, the fight is a few years will no longer be about providing contraception but rather providing abortion. That is why, despite all the fish from media, we are not sticking an inch on the RH Bill. We know what "reproductive health" means when people like David say it... as she herself says.

—MICHAEL ANTHONY SERIL, 7 Stella St., Bel-Air 2, Makati City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to No. (897-4783, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

PARTICIPANTS in the Kalibo Ati-atihan paint themselves black in keeping with the tradition that dates back to the pre-Spanish period.

'Ati-atihan': Antidote to trauma

By Hector Firburgado
Kalibo, Aklan

THE LINGERING ill-effects of the massive flooding seven months ago have failed to dampen the drum-beatings and the melodic tunes of lyres in the capital town of Kalibo in Aklan as residents commemorate the annual Ati-Atihan festival this week.

Thousands of tourists have flocked to the week-long festival dubbed the mother and most fascinating of festivals held every January in honor of the child Jesus, or the Santo Nino, Kalibo.

Benny Tirazona, secretary of the Kalibo Ati-Atihan Management Board and festival events director, said all hotels and pensions houses in Kalibo and neighboring towns have been booked since last month.

"Hundreds hoteliers and private homes have accommodated guests looking for a place to stay during the festival," Tirazona told the Inquirer.

The festivities kicked off on Saturday with street dancing, live bands and food festivals at the Pantalan and Magsaysay parks, the two main venues of the events.

Highlights

High schools and colleges in Aklan held the "Pagdiriwang," a street dancing parade on Tuesday along the town's main streets. The next day, it was the turn of students from public schools to hold the "Sadsad Parasad" parade.

On Wednesday, dancers from the 17 towns of the province joined the "Magsaysay" parade highlighted by giant images and figures made of paper mache.

From Jan. 14 to 16, thousands of dancers flocked to the "Pulakat" or "Pasigak," where those seeking cure for diseases joined a leaping rite of the Sto. Niño of Kalibo.

A re-enactment of the "Barter of Panay" was held on Wednesday at the Magsaysay Park.

The highlight of the festivities started on Friday until Sunday with street dancing and merry-making.

The Ati-Atihan tribe camps, the main attraction of the festival, will be held today followed by a fireworks display in the evening. On Sunday, the festival will be capped with a Misa and procession of tribes and devotees.

More participants

Tirazona said many tribes spent for less costly materials for costumes, props and instruments because of the damage wrought by Typhoon "Frank."

The typhoon, which struck on June 21 last year, triggered the worst flooding in Panay Island with Aklan among the hardest hit.

Ati-Atihan tribe costumes and instruments were among those damaged by floodwater and mudflow that ravaged the town for weeks.

But Tirazona said 32 tribes joined the festival this year, more than the 26 that participated last year.

They are grouped in four categories: Aboriginal, Original Tribe (Tribu), Original Tribe (Bag) and Modern.

Tribes under the Aboriginal category will wear costumes made of indigenous materials such as abaca fibre, shell, and feathers and leaves. Those with a maximum of 40 warriors will compete under the Original Tribe (Small) category. Those with more than 40 warriors in a maximum of 120 fall under the Original Tribe (Big) category.

The Modern category groups have contemporary costumes and props including floats and carnival-type designs.

Roots

There are various accounts on how the festival started. One belief is that it was then local ruler a prince paid was reached by the Arcos and the Malay settlers from Borneo who had recruited chieftains after the Malays settled on Panay Island.

To celebrate the unethical peace and to show their unity, the Malays covered themselves with soot to look like an Aeta.

Another version says the festival started in 1212 when the first wave of Malayans led by 10 Bornean datu chieftains landed in the southern shore of Panay, then known as Antique.

The datus led by Datu Puti were said to be fleeing their homeland to escape death from the cruel ruler Datu Makatunao.

The datus, their families and followers, traveled on "balangay" (outrigger sailing boats) and landed on Panay Island. They negotiated with Aeta chieftain Marikudo for the purchase of the island from the Aeta inhabitants.

The "Barter of Panay" was followed by a festive ceremony, said to last several days, to honor and welcome the new settlers.

In the 19th century, it is said that a Spanish priest named the date of the festival to coincide with the feast day of the Sto. Niño when he baptized 1,000 inhabitants of Kalibo. This is why the festival is both a celebration of Christian years and the pagan merry-making of Aeta.

Spontaneous merry-making

From a local affair, the festival has attracted both foreign and local tourists. Many other fiestas with were patterned after the Ati-Atihan.

The festival was chosen by the United Nations Committee on Tourism as Asia's best tourist attraction in 1983.

The Kalibo Ati-Atihan is known for its spontaneous merry-making and street dancing where anyone could join any of the tribes dancing in the main streets of Kalibo.

Tirazona said this year's festival is more significant because Kalibo residents were still coping with the effects of the typhoon.

"The festival is a celebration of life and faith to help restore the lingering trauma and fear from the devastation," said Tirazona.

THE BALIWO Ati-atihan has attracted foreign and local tourists.

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Closing date for submission of completed application forms and requirements:
13 February 2009

Across the NATION

Rains won't cease in flooded areas

Death toll rising as Pagasa says weird weather to last until February

THE DEATH TOLL IN WHAT METEOROLOGISTS had described as an unusual weather phenomenon is rising as rains and floods continue to wreak havoc in Mindanao and parts of Visayas and Bicol.

As of yesterday, the casualty figure stood at 21 based on official accounts.

Rescuers recovered eight more bodies yesterday. Four bodies were pulled out of a landslide in Datu A. man and a woman drowned when two boats capsized in Sulipao and Dingge Island while the bodies of two men were fished out in the Agusan River.

While the local weather bureau, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said a cold front on the eastern seaboard triggered the rains, some of its experts earlier said they were puzzled by the phenomenon.

Rising streams and landslides have disrupted the lives of more than 190,000 people, some 23,000 of whom sought refuge out of their homes, the civil defense office said.

Among the flooded areas in Mindanao were the cities of Cagayan de Oro, Gingoog and Davao del.

The World Food Programme (WFP), responding to appeals for help from local governments, is to provide up to 600 tons of rice to help 25,000 families displaced by the Mindanao floods, the UN agency said in a statement Friday.

In northern Mindanao, three people remain missing.

The Cagayan de Oro City council declared a state of calamity in the stricken city as floods damaged bridges and landslides hit 13 villages, according to Napoleon Ambida Jr., social welfare officer.

Misamis Oriental Vice Gov. Yevgeny Rabaya said the province's legislative body declared the province in a state of calamity, too.

He said at least 40 evacuation centers had been set up.

Two bridges that connect Cagayan de Oro City and Gingoog City were threatened by raging floods, forcing officials to close them to traffic and effectively cutting the link between the two cities.

In northern Mindanao alone, more than 138,000 people have been displaced and land is causing severe.

In Compostela Valley, two workers of mining firm Apex Mined Corp. were killed in a landslide in their camp, according to Gov. Arturo Uy.

In Davao del Norte, authorities were bringing relief goods to at least 6,000 families displaced by floods in Tagum City and her town.

Thousands of residents lost homes in Bicol when waves as tall as houses swept coastal villages.

"It was the first time we experienced this kind of storm surge," said Christopher Lee, provincial social worker.

Stephen Anderson, WFP country director, said his agency was doing its best to help the flood victims, many of whom were already displaced by fighting between separatist guerrillas and government troops.

Floods in Southern Samar and Cebu have killed 11 persons and displaced more than 18,000 families, according to officials.

On Thursday, Southern Samar Gov. Raul Daza asked the provincial board to declare a state of calamity in the province.

Heavy downpour left dozens in four coastal villages in Cebu, according to the DOJ.

Authorities stopped vessels in Bicol ports from going out to sea, stranding at least 470 passengers.

The weather disturbance, according to meteorologist Cristina Eleazar of Pagasa, was likely to last until the end of February.

Reports from Gloria Galuz, Ephesian Aguilar and Fermin Grimon, Inquirer bureaus in Cagayan de Oro, Gingoog and Davao; Jhaymes Napallacan and Joey Ledesma, Inquirer Visayas; Grace Alfonsa, Jeff Alipala, Geoffrey Madrid, Ryan Rosauro, Tristan Lim and Orlando Dacay, Inquirer Mindanao; and AFP

A BOY helps remove flood water at the Sta. Rita Parish Church in Gingoog City.

22 'sacadas' rescued from Negros plantation

By Carlo P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—TWENTY-TWO sacadas (migrant farm laborers), several of them claiming to have been maltreated by their contractor, were rescued by the police from a sugarcane plantation in Escalante, Negros Occidental.

The workers, three of whom were minors, were taken from the sugar plantation on Wednesday by municipal social workers who came accompanied by the police, said Senior Insp. Boni Sandagan of the Negros Occidental Police Provincial Office.

Initial police investigation showed that 24 farm laborers came from Barangay Maybunga, Lezo-an in Antique and were recruited in September last year by a certain Nini Duquila of Barbaza, Antique.

Sandagan said the workers were each paid P4,800 in advance as wages in a sugarcane plantation in Escalante.

But most of the workers did not receive salaries as their pay was deducted from the P4,080 advanced to them while the rest of their wages were supposedly used to pay for their debts from a canteen that provided them food, Sandagan said.

Two of the migrant workers were able to escape two weeks ago and reported their plight to their families in Antique who, in turn, reported the matter to the police.

After being alerted by the Antique police, Sandagan said they immediately planned a joint rescue operation led by the Negros police's Women and Children Concern Desk (WCCD) headed by SPO4 Judy Flores and assisted by SPO4 Jovita Rio of the Escalante police WCCD, Janet Tampoctoc of the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office and Hacienda Gamuza Barangay Captain Joel Estrabillo.

The rescue groups were particularly concerned about the three minors recruited to work as sacadas but the 19 other migrant farm workers, who claimed to have been maltreated by their contractor, also decided to leave the hacienda.

Sandagan said the Negros police were now coordinating with their counterparts in Antique in preparing criminal charges for violation of laws on child labor against Duquila.

The rescued migrant farm workers have already returned to their homes in Lezo-an, Antique, with the help of the Negros police and the local government of Escalante, he said.

Korean project put to halt in bid to save flag

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THIS CITY ALMOST LOST the original Philippine flag unfurled by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo in 1898 when the house where the relic is kept almost collapsed due to a landslide caused by construction activities in an adjoining piece of property.

The city government has temporarily stopped the construction of a multilevel building this week after the flag and the house turned by the Aguinaldo family, according to the city environment office.

Cordelia Lacsamana, the city environment officer, said ground inspections conducted by government engineers showed violations of mandatory safety procedures for construction.

Korean backed

Emilio Aguinaldo Suntay III, Aguinaldo's great grandson, said the family has been fighting since 2007 to block the construction of the building owned by a Filipino-Korean consortium because the developer encroached the hillside that had been holding up a residential subdivision in Barangay Kias.

The encroachment had destroyed the support base of the Aguinaldo property but their complaints fell on deaf ears, Suntay said.

The ground beneath the Aguinaldo property caved in on Jan. 8, destroying the house's underground levels and endangering the room that holds the Philippine flag that was raised in Kawit, Cavite, on June 12, 1898.

The flag is kept in a temperature-controlled room where it is not put on display as the Emilio Aguinaldo Museum on Session Road is closed.

Protection

The flag is owned in protective chemicals, and is laid out on a bed for exhibit.

But Suntay's wife had to fold the tattered relic quickly when the house's ground level collapsed. It is now stored in the family museum.

The Suntay family branch of the Aguinaldo clan brought to Baguio the flag that was discovered under Aguinaldo's pillow upon his death.

The flag is cushioned by a metallic wire mesh and has deeper colors compared to the contemporary flag. It contains the same three stars and a sun, but this symbol also bears a face.

The Aguinaldo family has been fighting to open the official government acknowledgement of its authenticity, Suntay said.

When the tremors visited the Suntay house on Friday, the slide had swept toward the room that kept the vintage flag.

Only an antique chandelier remains in the flag's old room.

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CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM

Manalo snatches RP Ladies crown by 3 strokes

By Hecong R. Castillo

CAMARINES, CASTILLEJOS—BOBBIE MANALO PUT away the most important title of her career yesterday, hurling a wobbly finish to salvage a one-over par 73 and snatch a three-stroke victory in the ICTSI Philippine Ladies Amateur championship.

The 16-year-old Manalo used a hot front-nine 33 to maintain a double bogey-5 on the final hole for a 218 total over 54 holes at the mind-sweep Legends Course of the Manila Southwoods here.

Miranda, the first-round co-leader who lay one stroke behind Ramos, Lee Jeong-hwa overnight, held off Dottie Ardina and Sirima Blaise Lee, who fired identical 76s, for joint second at 221.

Playing in a flight ahead of the final group made up of the two Koreans and Ardina, Miranda dropped four shots in her final four holes but was never really threatened as her closest pursuers faltered one after the other.

Lee lost her head after the first nine holes despite a 35, before her game completely fell apart coming in with a 43, the bubbled homewith a 79 for 222, in vie for fourth place with compatriot Choi Hyunjoo (72).

Ardina shot herself in the foot with a 40 going out, while Grace Lee fell five strokes back in the same stretch after a 38.

Sunshine Bernardel and Hsiao Lugapit, the first second-on leaders with two others, shot a 74 and a 75, respectively, to finish sixth and seventh with 223 and 225 totals.

Children Bards, who lost all hopes of repeating after tanking in consecutive 79s, closed out with a 74 and finished 10th on 230, four off Jiny Cabanero/Irma Cabreza, who had a 71.

The final round scores:

MANALO: New toast of ladies golf

SPORTSWATCH

NCA World Slasher Derby finals under way at Ynares

AFTER TWO DAYS OF INTENSE BATTLES, the National Cockers Alliance (NCA) World Slasher Championship Derby winner will be crowned today at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City.

The entries Super Great James Firefly, Pilipinas 1, Lucky PiYuan, Zaldong Black Cobra and Sunburst Champions drew the prize with 4 points each while Jimpher RS is alone in second spot with 3.5 points.

Also in contention with 3 points are Tinsulan 114, Diego 1, Bisongsman, Makati International Inc. 4-6 8-Cock Derby, Konsensiya 2, Really Mahogany Arena, JT Cream Lift Nonsugar Brangcorp Realty, SJP Surveyors, BMR, SI Realty-1, PAN, Sagupaan Complanar 2009, Ivan Ilano, PMB, Sagupaan Ramman, Magz Sundance, Pinoy Brangcorp and Pampa Cot. Inc. 22 8-Cock/PK Farm.

WSC bidders face media

TOP LOCAL GAMEFOWL BREEDERS AND their counterparts from Japan, Taiwan, Germany, Estonia, South, Australia, Saipan, Malaysia and the United States will clash in the 2009 World Slasher Cup International 8-Cock Derby slated Monday to Saturday next week at Araneta Coliseum.

The first leg of this biannual derby event has gathered over 200 entries, the largest in WSC history.

The participants will face the media today in a press presentation at the Araneta Grand Ballroom of Araneta Mall in Araneta Center, Quezon City.

3M Ramadan finals today

MORE THAN 100 POINTS WERE SCORED—and today is the championship round of the 3M Ramadan 8-Cock Derby at the San Juan Coliseum.

Unbeaten entries dominated the elimination rounds with three wins each.

Among them were Mayor Joseph Ejercito Estrada, Engr. Abdi Pasig of Bulacan, Mayor Lucy Torres-Gomez, Manny Gallindez, Iron Hadaji Pineda, Ate Tan, Ka Bald, Raymond Tuason, Congressman Florencio Noel Matabang and Mayor Roy Pangandaman.

SAN MIGUEL's Danny Seigle proves he is shut off Harvey Carey of Talk 'N Text in last night's PBA game. Story on A14. AUGUST SANTOS

Manny insists: No Hatton deal

By Cedell P. Tapay

AS FAR AS MANNY PACQUIAO IS CONcerned, there is still no deal in sight for their much-dragged Ricky Hatton.

This was confirmed yesterday by Pacquiao's adviser Boy "Pedrol" Suñal, who said that the Filipino superstar isn't fighting Hatton unless the revenue-sharing ratio is his favor.

"Manny's stand is the same: he is not fighting unless the numbers more or less favor," Suñal told this reporter.

Pacquiao is demanding 60 percent of fight and pay-per-view purses, a sharing that does not sit well with the Hatton camp, which claimed that a verbal arrangement for a 50-50 split had already been made.

Suñal's statement conflicted with that of Pacquiao's promoter Bob Arum, who claimed Wednesday that the fight is back on track after Pacquiao sent personnel bad of the PPV revenue-sharing scheme, which Hatton has a huge following in, an interview with boxingscribes.com's Michael Woodley, Arum said Pacquiao could earn more than the $30 million he got from shooting Oscar De La Hoya last month.

"Manny just got 32 percent in the De La Hoya fight," Arum was quoted as saying.

Arum also said the MGM Grand Arena has been selected as the venue for the fight.

Asked if Pacquiao would be amenable to a 55-45 deal, an idea broached by trainer Freddie Roach, Suñal replied: "He might. But he is still thinking about it."

Pacquiao is expected to Bacolod City today to grace the opening of the Street ABAP National Amateur Boxing Championships.

Bulls surprise Cavs

CHICAGO—THE CHICAGO BULLS HANDED LEBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers just their seventh loss of the season with a 102-98 victory in Chicago.

Luol Deng scored 22 points to propel the Bulls (38-10) to an eight-win.

In the other NBA matchup, the surging Denver Nuggets edged the Phoenix Suns, 119-113, and the Portland Trail Blazers downed the New Jersey Nets, 105-99. Reuters, AP

HBO crew told: Tell truth on Wild Card incident

By Noah Beniniad

AN HBO SPORTS CREW HAS BEEN requested to tell the truth in the case of a former friend of world boxing supremo Manny Pacquiao who has sued trainer Freddie Roach for damages, it was reported from California yesterday.

The arrangement, Gerry Associate, a former close ally of Pacquiao, has appealed to several HBO crew men, who were said to be present inside the Roach's Wild Card gym when the alleged mauling incident happened on Oct. 20 to "come out and tell the truth."

The report, written by correspondents Alex Wild, was sent to the bosses by Associate.

"I appeal to all those TV crew men of HBO who witnessed the incident to please come out and tell the truth," Associate, who resides in the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office, survey in a letter e-mailed to the TV network. "Please help me from out the truth now that a case has been formally filed in court."

The 30-year-old Associate accused Roach of hitting him in the back while he was inside the gym after he escorted Pacquiao from the locker's The Palazzo apartment in Los Angeles.

"The HBO TV crew were there because they were documenting a story in preparation for Pacquiao's fight against Oscar De La Hoya [on Dec. 6 on Las Vegas]," said Associate.

Associate said the incident happened in the locker room where he was about to ask permission from Pacquiao to wait downstairs after being told by gym security chief Bob Wenn and Roach himself that he was not welcome in the gym.

Associate said he approached Roach who told him to "get the hell out of the gym."

"Next must have thought I would tell Manny that he wanted to drive me away," Associate explained.

He said he fell on his knees after allegedly being clopped in the neck by Roach from behind. On his way to the door, Associate said he felt sharp and brief. Instead of helping him, some of the trainer's supporters allegedly jeered and accused him of acting.

Roach has denied having inserted.

Bob Arum must try this Solomonic solution

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(BIG BOXE: Over 300 cyclists led by members of the national team, competed in yesterday's inaugural Tour of the Inaugural Cycling Federation of the Philippines, in a Wapik Power support for the new set of PhilCycling officers headed by former national rider Rolando Nieto as the Quezon Memorial Circle Arch Information of Metro Manila will wear the tour.)

* * *

NOW IT TURNS OUT THAT THE $6.00 split Manny Pacquiao had allegedly agreed to during an initial money discussion with promoter Bob Arum happened in the discomfort of, very Madame, a condom room.

"Pacman felt the call of nature and took a bathroom break," Michael Marley wrote in his recently biting column for boxingscribe.com.

"Now you wonder: Will the Hatton-Pacquiao deal go down the toilet?" Marley asked.

The enemy conference, he revealed, took place at the plush Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills hotel where Pacquiao, his entourage in tow, honored a dinner invitation.

* * *

Yesterday, there were contending reports—one saying it's a go, after Pacquiao agreed to the even split in pay-per-view profit; the other saying Pacquiao is sticking to his demand for a 60-40 sharing, trade-in or leave it.

It's odd, but isn't a boxer only at his best when he does his best and gives everything to the other fellow?

This—generally—is the case of a worn-out boxing adage which says that, inside the ring, it's always better to give than to receive.

* * *

Corny. That powerful quip is as callous as the footsteps on Mt. Arayat's Barkada trail.

In fact, the revered promoter-mentor of pacmen after Pacquiao learned vehemently that the showing should be 60-40 in his favor.

Arum even threatened to pull the plug, cancel the fight, if Pacquiao didn't relent.

Arum has also been going around to explain lengthily the history and decency of an even split between Pacquiao and Hatton.

* * *

Of course, there's always something that could be done.

And Arum need not beg for Solomonic wisdom in order to break the impasse.

The solution: Give Hatton his deserved 30-30 split, but only for the profits to be derived from the PPV buys in England.

Outside of Hatton's sovereignty, Pacquiao should get what he rightly feels he deserves.

If either of the two boxers turns down the solution, Arum need not waste a word.

He should pull the plug, pronto.

* * *

In case they're wondering, that Solomonic suggestion was not culled from this cagey's feisty-fazed brain.

It's courtesy of sportswriter Rudy Salud, the founding secretary of the World Boxing Council (WBC), whose resolutions and by-laws the respected lawyer crafted.

"In the first place, Hatton cannot claim that the enormous PPV buys generated in the fight against Floyd Mayweather Jr. was realized through his doubtful pulling power," Salud explained.

If Hatton is indeed that great a draw, Salud asked, why did his fight against Mayorga get only 200,000 PPV subscriptions?

* * *

Another thing.

Arum can't give down Pacquiao and insist the 60 boxing superhero had agreed to the initial 50-50 proposal.

As Marley suggested, rather belatedly, Arum should've made Pacquiao sign any piece of paper available during the brief, steamy rendezvous.

Sorry, but there was no formal memorandu, nothing for Arum to thang his hat on, Marley noted.

The solomonic-based solution, needless to say, is as plain as giving Caesar what is Caesar's.

Neither Don Bing nor Jose Solomon can contest its wisdom.

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Sietba, PBA back bowling polls deferment

THE SEN. LUCAS BAY TAMPEREEN SPORTS ASSOCIATION (SLSTBA) and the Pasay Bowling Association are backing a Philippine Olympic Committee order postponing the Philippine Bowling Congress election scheduled for tomorrow. The Olympic body said the PBC's Securities and Exchange Commission registration expired in 2006 and as such, the PBC's political personality is deemed to have ceased.

Editor Tobbyn S. Melendres • Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

SPORTS

SMB ties series; Alaska up, 2-0

By Manong R. Candila

SAN MIGUEL BEER CAME OUT WITH all guns cocked and firing to dead balls N Tent a 112-103 defeat last night that squared their KFC-PBA Philippine Cup semifinal series after two games at the Araneta Coliseum.

Danny Seigle and Dondon Hontiveros scored 23 points each as the Beermen broke away in the third period to coast to the win that not only averaged a former 1 iron but also restored their confidence heading to tomorrow's key third game.

"One thing [that beyond this win] was that we were aggressive early," San Miguel coach Joel Banaguas said. "We came out fire the last time. It's like we played like we had a hangover."

The Beermen lost the opener by 29 points but they didn't show any signs of playing with deflated egos, running at every chance and playing defense like crazy to frustrate the Aces.

Seigle scored 11 points in the third quarter and Olsen Racela returned from a one-game suspension to keep order and rounds up the Beermen's offense that had them taking leads of as many as 16 points.

"I still expect a tough series," Banaguas said. "You can never say what's going to happen. They struggled tonight, yet the game was still close."

In the second game, Alaska took a 2-1 lead in their series against Sta. Lucia, getting big shots from Joe Devance and Willie Miller down the stretch for a 94-87 victory.

Ano man ang hula, Seat Sale 'di mawawala!

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PBL q'final battles today

BACERA AND Hapee Tembyuco, taking twelve-to-beat scenarios, aim for Final Four berths against two surging squads in the PBL #2 Pier Invitational Conference.

The Energy Pioneers take on Burger King at 2 p.m., while the Complete Protein team hosts the defending Phoenix at 4 p.m. at the Guadalupe Viejo Sports Complex in Makati City.

"We have a 60-percent chance of entering the semifinals," said Hapee coach Joe Abanilla. "But these are just percentages. We still have to work for it. Offense[s] is the bottom more right now." Jeremiah M. Rapa

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Teens 'high' on drugs kill 17-year-old honor student

By Nancy Carvajal

ANOTHER BRIGHT YOUNG LIFE WAS snuffed out in a senseless shooting incident allegedly because of illegal drugs.

Silver Jo Young, 17, an honor student of Lagro High School, was flying the tables on her grandmother's snake outside their home in Barangay Holy Spirit in Quezon City at around 8:30 Thursday night when she was shot and killed by youths who were allegedly high on drugs, police said.

Supt. Moises Habanag, head of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said Chrisly's cousins, Marvilyn Castañedas, 15, and Jennifer Bellosa, 16, were also shot and rendered to critical condition at East Avenue Medical Hospital.

Habanag said two of the seven suspects had been subsequently arrested in follow-up operations.

Those arrested were identified by the police as Jayson Castañeda, IV, and Allen Fuentes, 21, neighbors of the victims.

Habanag identified two other suspects as Frederick Chavez and Raymond Sagun and the remaining three as Jerome, Dino, and Ryan.

"The suspects are known to residents as drug addicts and had been terrorizing residents in the area," Habanag disclosed.

He also said that two of the suspects—Chavez and Fuentes—have several cases of robbery and homicide and

TEENS, A-9

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Barangay San Lo chief suspended for 90 days

By Allison W. Lopez

THE CHAIRMAN of an Affluent barangay in Makati City was preventively suspended for 90 days after the city council found "strong evidence" to probe him allegedly anomalous transactions involving over P627 million in barangay funds.

The one-page order against Barangay San Lorenzo chair Joshua John Santiago, who faced an administrative complaint for dishonesty and misconduct in office, was served past 3 p.m. yesterday as Santiago's confidant in San Lorenzo Village and at his lawyers' office in Quezon City.

The order was signed by Mayor Jejomar Binay as "consequence" of Resolution 2009-004 endorsed by 13 councilors, who acted on the complaint of five barangay kagawads last November.

Santiago was asked to "cease and desist from performing his duties and functions as punong barangay" for 90 days—the maximum period that could be given in a preventive suspension.

Santiago had told the Inquirer that he thought of barricading the barangay hall with his supporters yesterday when reports of his suspension circulated. But he dismissed rest as push through with the idea so "no one would get hurt."

The Inquirer could no longer contact Santiago, who earlier claimed that the charges were "politically motivated," for his name more on the suspension order the order was served.

In the resolution, the councilors said that based on pleadings and documents submitted, the evidence of guilt was strong.

The complainants—Silvig, Erasmo Mesa, Gaia Lagulo-Plantaleon, Jocelyn Hernandez and Herman Gules—claimed that Santiago failed to explain P376 million worth of disbursements to barangay funds.

They also said the chair installed only 538 out of 1,209 prefabricated lampposts worth nearly P44 million—leaving 671 pieces inside a warehouse valued for P50,000 a month.

Radical solution to Sulu kidnapping

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

ONCE AGAIN, THE PHILIPPINES is on the world map for the abduction of three workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Abu Sayyaf, the suspected perpetrators, does not recognize rules of war so the past kidnappings of humanitarian workers will show.

No amount of pleading and appealing will make these bandits release their hostages.

So, let fellow Moros solve the impasse in their own way.

Bula Emo Abdusalam Tan, who harnessed for the abduction, has threatened to kidnap the families of the kidnappers.

"I will not forgive this incident until I am rescuing the families of the suspected kidnappers to better cooperate with the authorities; otherwise, we will treat them like kidnappers," said Tan.

I am going to bet my last cotton that if Tan is serious about kidnapping the families of the kidnappers those ISIK workers will be released in no time.

* * *

I am very sure that Tan's ultimatum will work 100 percent.

The Philippine Marines did that in Basilan—holding the relatives of Abu Sayyaf members who abducted two Marines.

The comrades of the two kidnapped Marines sent word to the Abu Sayyaf that if they were harmed so would the relatives of the kidnappers in the custody of the Marines.

The two kidnapped Marines were released unharmed in exchange for the release of the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers.

Is this a savage solution? When you deal with savages, you have to be savage yourself.

* * *

Why wasn't that radical solution used in the Dos Palmas kidnapping incident and the earlier Ojeda's hostage crisis?

According to my sources, the reason was that government negotiators in those two kidnapping incidents also netted from the ransom money.

If they used the "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" solution to the two kidnapping incidents, nobody in the government side would have earned wallets and wallets of ransom money, the sources claimed.

As it was, everybody was happy—both the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers and government negotiators, the sources added.

* * *

President Gloria has ordered a review of all World Bank-funded construction projects amid reports the WB has banned three local firms from WB-funded projects because of graft.

Deputy Palace Spokesperson Anthony Golez said charges would be filed against the grafters in the WB-funded construction projects.

According to Golez, one of the Arroyo administration's programs was to "weed out corruption."

Oh, yeah!

Al Golez serious, supposedly.

Teens 'high' on drugs . . .

Front page A-1

have commanding warrants of arrest.

On New Year's day, Mahiang revealed that the suspects also shot and wounded two boys, but were not arrested because no one would testify against them.

Pursuit operations

He added that pursuit operations against the other suspects are ongoing.

Officer-in-case PO2 Jon Marcelo also revealed that six more of the suspects, Ate Cabalfin, would be charged with obstruction of justice and is now being held at the police station.

"The shoot-in clothes Salgado, who was at the police station described the victim as a sweet daughter and had no issues from on her body.

"She was sweet, bright and was also to everyone," Salgado told reporters in an interview as he tried to hold back tears.

The father added that the victim had just told him the other day that she would again receive a medal in her graduation on May in March.

"She was a consistent honor student and she knows good education and high grades would only be his way to a better life," he said.

Salgado works as a security guard for Eastport Security Agency.

The father added that fellow dreams of being a stewardess.

"She wants to be a stewardess someday but planned to take up nursing like her older brother who is also graduating this March," he added.

The arrested suspects denied participation in the shooting incident and told reporters they could not have done it because they were already asleep at the time of the shooting.

MetroBriefs

Bungalow fire

A three-alarm fire that razed a bungalow in Manila on Friday afternoon was probably caused by a faulty electrical wiring, fire officials said.

The fire, which started at around 1:30 p.m., destroyed the house owned by Rosalinda Ramos at 1234 Pedro Gil St., Ermita, Manila, according to Senior Insp. Luis Barcelona, Manila Fire District (MFD) fire investigator.

Barcelona said the fire was reported to the MFD at 1:33 p.m. and was put out at 2:30 p.m.

Damage to the property was estimated at P2,500.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Carabao Festival

Traffic will be rerouted in the Makati Central Business District tomorrow to pave way for the Manila Bulletin-inspired parade of the Carabao Festival. Department of Public Safety director Rene Inesejido Sabi-Ofilgud said both lanes of Ayala Avenue, from Makati Avenue to Herrera Street will be closed to vehicles while both lanes of Paseo de Roxas Avenue, from Gamboa Street to De la Rosa, will also be shut down starting at 8 p.m. today.

Costumed students from the city's public schools will commence at the Salcedo Rotary carpark on Ayala and Makati Avenues at 3 p.m. for the colorful parade at 4 p.m. along Ayala, ending at Paseo. The DPS advised motorists to avoid the area and take alternate routes.

Allison W. Lopez

Life term

Edgardo Baluyot, 50, a 6-year-old woman three times in 1992. Baluyot was convicted and is serving his sentence in a Quezon City court which said parties should be served even if the complainant is already dead. In her decision, Judge Rosario Quiroz-Magbuyo of Regional Trial Court Branch 96 also ordered Baluyot to pay P100,000 in damages to the family of the incident is abused. "For every of the outrage and cry for justice reaching been gone, the essence of justice in vindicating the aggrieved, whether living or dead, continues killing and in choosing the victim of the sex remains," she pointed out. Maria (not her real name), was 8 years old at the time of the crime. Court documents showed she last died in 2004 because of failed health. In his defense, Black denied having assaulted the cousin. But the judge explained that the victim positively identified Black as the one who raped her three times.

Jodi M. Arnaiz

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IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES ON ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION OF CHATTEL MORTGAGE AND OTHER FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

RULE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. Purpose. This implementing guidelines is promulgated for the purpose of prescribing rules and procedures in the implementation and use of the Philippine Electronic Registration and Information System (PERIS) for the recording of electronic mortgage and other transactions involving chattels in the Registry of Deeds.

Section 2. Legal Basis. Act No. 1508 entitled "An Act Providing for the Registration of Title to Lands Under the Operation of the Torrens System", Republic Act No. 3135 entitled "An Act to Amend Certain Sections of Act Numbered Fourteen Hundred Sixty-Six, Known as the Land Registration Act", as amended, Republic Act No. 6732 entitled "An Act Providing for the Registration of Chattel Mortgages and for Other Purposes", Republic Act No. 8792 otherwise known as "The Electronic Commerce Act", Republic Act No. 9776 otherwise known as "The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation Charter of 2009", Republic Act No. 9776 otherwise known as "The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation Charter of 2009" as amended.

Section 3. Definition of Terms. For purposes of these guidelines, the following terms or words and phrases shall mean or be understood as follows:

a. **Certification** – refers to a statement by which the existence or non-existence of the requirements of a particular fact or circumstance is affirmed either by the owner or the Registrar of Deeds and its delegates.

b. **Certified True Copy** – refers to the exact and unchanged duplication produced by the Registrar of Deeds and/or its delegates as provided by Section 12 of Presidential Decree No. 1529.

c. **Chattel Mortgage** – refers to the customary policies and procedures related to obtaining the benefits or consideration from the borrowing entities and/or individuals or organizations after a contract or formal, binding agreement.

d. **Chattel Mortgagee** – refers to the mortgagee who is the real possessor of all interests, rights, claims, benefits or other matters in certain possession, investment or investment instrument, by which a right is established or an obligation is extinguished, or by which a right is established or affirmed, which is commonly executed (transmitted, made) permanent, attested or produced electronically, which is commonly executed (transmitted, made) permanent, attested or produced electronically, which is commonly executed (transmitted, made) permanent, attested or produced electronically

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Ocampo

Lull in Gaza as Israel envoys consider Hamas truce offer

GAZA—ISRAEL SAID ITS GAZA offensive could be "in the final act" on Friday as it dispatched envoys to discuss truce terms after Hamas made a ceasefire offer to end three weeks of fighting that has killed more than 1,100 people.

"Hopefully we're in the final act," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's spokesperson Miah Regev said, adding that briefings by the envoys working in Washington and Cairo on Friday could be followed by swift decisions by the security Cabinet.

Such decisions could be made on Friday or Saturday, Israeli officials said, as Palestinians in the Gaza Strip savored a relative lull after intense combat on Thursday that many had seen as a final bruising push before agreeing to a ceasefire terms.

The Israeli Army said that, for the first time in weeks, no rockets had landed in Israel from Gaza. It was far from clear if that truly signaled how far the end of today's fighting was Israel's key demand in launching its offensive on Dec. 27.

After another uneasy night on which Israeli aircraft struck 40 targets in the crowded coastal enclave, Friday morning dawned relatively quiet on a population ransacked by the nature of advances by Israeli tanks into the city of Gaza on Thursday.

Diplomatic hints spoken with growing confidence that some kind of ceasefire will be arranged in the coming days and suggested that Israel had been making a last push against its Islamist enemies before a deal was brokered—possibly in time for the inauguration of the new US president Barack Obama on Tuesday.

An Israeli air strike on Thursday killed one of Hamas' top leaders, Saeed Seyyam, the interior minister in Gaza's governing Hamas government and leader of 13,000 armed security men.

Nine other people were killed in that bombing.

Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, whose prospects in a Feb. 10 election may have been improved by the short war coming on more than 13 Israeli lives, was to hold talks on Friday in Washington with the outgoing administration of George W. Bush.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has told Olmert that Washington, his key ally, is prepared to offer some form of guarantee to secure the Jewish state's demand that any truce lasting ensure Hamas will be unable to rearm through smuggling tunnels from Egypt.

Egypt is mediating between Israel and Hamas-backed Hamas, which is detested by Israel and its Western allies for its refusal to abandon an objective of destroying the Jewish state by force and establishing an Islamist state in all of what was Palestine before the creation of Israel in 1948.

Hamas and diplomatic sources told Reuters on Thursday that Hamas had offered a one-year renewable truce on condition that all Israeli forces withdrew within a week and that all the border crossings with Israel and Egypt would be opened.

They have been all but closed under an Israeli-led blockade since Hamas seized control of Gaza in 2007 from forces loyal to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of the Fatah faction. Reuters

PALESTINIAN women wail after seeing the body of a relative killed in an Israeli missile strike at Kamal Edwan hospital in Beit Lahiya, northern Gaza Strip, on Jan. 15.

Bush defends troubled record in farewell speech

BUSH Reuters

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Thursday defended his actions to avert a collapse of the financial system and protect America from another terrorist attack as he mounted a farewell bid to polish his troubled legacy.

Five days before handing over the presidency to Barack Obama, Bush delivered a televised final address to the American people in which he sought to define a White House record that some historians are already ranking among the worst ever.

But even as he focused on what he saw as his successes, Bush was preparing to leave Obama with unfinished wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a bitter conflict in Gaza, a US economy deep in recession and a US image badly tarnished overseas.

"During the prospect of a financial collapse, we took decisive measures to safeguard our economy," Bush said from the White House, referring to a massive government intervention he ordered in response to the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and one that has sent shock waves across the globe, will be a key priority.

Bush warned, however, that the greatest challenge facing the incoming president remained the threat of another terrorist attack like the al-Qaida strikes on Sept. 11, 2001.

He acknowledged that some of his actions in response to 9/11 had been controversial but he stood by them and connected his with ex-ex-against-as doctrine widely criticized overseas.

"There is legitimate debate about many of these decisions. But there can be little debate about the results," the two-term Republican said. "America has gone more than seven years without another terrorist attack on our soil," he said.

Some of Bush's actions after the 9/11 attacks, such as establishing a detention center for terrorism suspects at Guantanamo and approving harsh interrogation methods that human rights groups said amounted to torture, severely damaged America's image abroad. Obama has vowed to close the facility.

"Our enemies are patient, and determined to strike again," Bush said in a brief address from the White House with Vice President Dick Cheney, his Cabinet and several dozen selected citizens in attendance. "Good and evil are present in this world, and between the two there can be no compromise."

While the clock ticking down on his presidency, Bush and his aides used his last few days of public events before Inauguration Day to try to put a positive spin on his record.

Pierre Fl speeches are a stand for departing US leaders, but the stakes are especially high for Bush, who will step down with one of the lowest public approval ratings of any president in modern times—in the mid-20 percent range.

Bush defended his foreign policy—from the unpopular war in Iraq to modern timetables with Iran and North Korea. "We have made the world freer," he said. Reuters

WORLD BRIEFS

Bank of America gets big gov't bailout

WASHINGTON/NEW YORK—Bank of America Corp. was rescued by the US government on Friday through a $20 billion bailout and a guarantee for almost $100 billion of potential losses on toxic assets to cushion the blow from a deteriorating balance sheet at Merrill Lynch & Co., its recently acquired brokerage. The bailout makes Bank of America the biggest recipient of taxpayer money next to Citigroup as the government pours cash into the nation's banks to plug holes left by bad loans. The worst housing crisis since the Great Depression and the worst recession in nearly years have hammered US banks. The capital is on top of $25 billion that Bank of America previously got from the Treasury Department's Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) in October and is the latest indication that banks are still struggling to come to grips with the financial crisis that began about 18 months ago. Reuters

NY probes financier who invested with Madoff

NEW YORK—J. Ezra Merkin, a New York financier, wrote his investors last month that he has made investments with Bernard L. Madoff's hedge fund was an elaborate Ponzi scheme. But not everyone sees him as a victim. The New York state attorney general, Andrew M. Cuomo, has issued subpoenas in an effort to determine whether Merkin had defrauded universities and charities who he invested their money with Madoff. Cuomo's office is seeking information from Merkin. He has received investments that he operated and IRS exempt institutions that gave him money to manage. Many of the institutions are now suing Merkin, claiming that they lost millions of dollars when he had invested money with Madoff without telling them. NYT

Family fears for reporter who threw shoes at Bush

BAGHDAD—More than a month has passed since an Iraqi television reporter threw his shoes at President George W. Bush during a Baghdad news conference held to highlight what Bush called a successful American military effort to pacify Iraq. The journalist, Muntader al-Zaidi, 29, who was immediately arrested, has been allowed only two visits—last none since Dec. 21, according to those close to him. His family and his lawyer say they have do not know where he is being held and that they are gravely concerned about his well-being because they have not been allowed to speak with him by telephone. On Thursday, Dhiyaa al-Saadi al-Zaidi's lawyer said he had recently seen medical records that were part of al-Zaidi's court file, which he said added credence to the journalist's claim that he had been beaten and tortured after his arrest by the security detail of the Iraqi prime minister, Nouri Kamal al-Maliki. AP, Dec. 14.

India tangle purified after low caste visit

BHUBANESWAR, India—Hindu priests in an eastern Indian state are under investigation for conducting a purification ritual soon after a minister belonging to a lower caste visited a famous temple, officials said on Friday. Minister after Pramila Mallick, a minister in Orissa state, prayed at the temple this week, Hindu priests shut the doors and threw away holy offerings, washed the floors and changed the idol's clothes, one official said. In India, millions of people formerly known as "untouchables" remain oppressed at the bottom of the ancient Hindu caste system. In spite of India's secular constitution banning caste-based discrimination, Dalits—those at the bottom of the caste system—are still commonly beaten or killed for using a well or worshipping at a temple reserved for upper castes. Reuters

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Editor Raul G. Manuelo ■ Assistant Editor Carrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Farm sector growth slowed to 3.92% in '08

Gov't sees better output this year

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE COUNTRY'S FARM OUTPUT GREW 3.92 PERCENT in 2008, well within the government's revised forecast of 3.8 to 4.5 percent and smaller than the 4.63-percent expansion in 2007.

Government documents released yesterday showed that all subsectors except for livestock expanded, though most failed to surpass 2007 growth.

Citing the full-year report by its Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, the Department of Agriculture said fisheries registered the fastest growth at 5.76 percent, followed by poultry at 4.71 and crops (including rice, corn, pineapples, and bananas, among others) at 4.08 percent.

It said that rice and corn production continued to increase despite a decline in fertilizer usage among farmers, with last year's output reaching 16.82 million metric tons (MT) or 3.34 percent higher than the 2007 record.

Corn output rose 1.81 percent to 6.93 million MT in 2008.

But livestock production contracted 3.06 percent due to lower hog production.

In 2007, fisheries grew 6.8 percent, poultry, 0.22 percent, crops, 5.47 percent, and livestock, 3.42 percent.

"The growth of Philippine agriculture in 2008 was slightly lower than expected, largely because of external factors that have hurt productivity not only in the country but in the rest of the world as well," Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said in a statement.

He said these "shocks," which largely affected palay and corn, included the prohibitive costs of fertilizer [breaking] in a 30-percent drop in fertilizer use, super typ[hoon]

[PAGE B2]

Finance pushes higher 'sin tax' rates

By Bernard W. Dominguez

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE IS pushing for a law that would simplify the excise tax system for alcohol and cigarettes as part of efforts to sustain improvements in tax collection.

Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves said a 2009 proposal on increasing the so-called "sin taxes" has, among similar proposed measures, the biggest revenue impact of raising between P120 billion and P190 billion in the first two years.

Teves was among the executives during a joint meeting of major business organizations held yesterday at the Diwal International in Makati City seeking an economic roadmap for the country in 2009.

Among the groups represented in the meeting were the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Financial Executives Association of the Philippines, the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Management Association of the Philippines, the Philippine Exporters Confederation, the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference of the Philippines.

Teves said his department suggested a two-tier excise tax regime in the first year of implementing an increase, which would yield additional collection of between P20 billion and P30 billion.

This would then graduate to a single rate scheme that would yield between P30 billion and P40 billion in the second year.

Additional excise tax collection would range from P40 billion to

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CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P47.120 = $1

as of 5 p.m. Jan. 16, 2009

P0.19 = ¥1

As of 5 p.m. Jan. 16, 2009

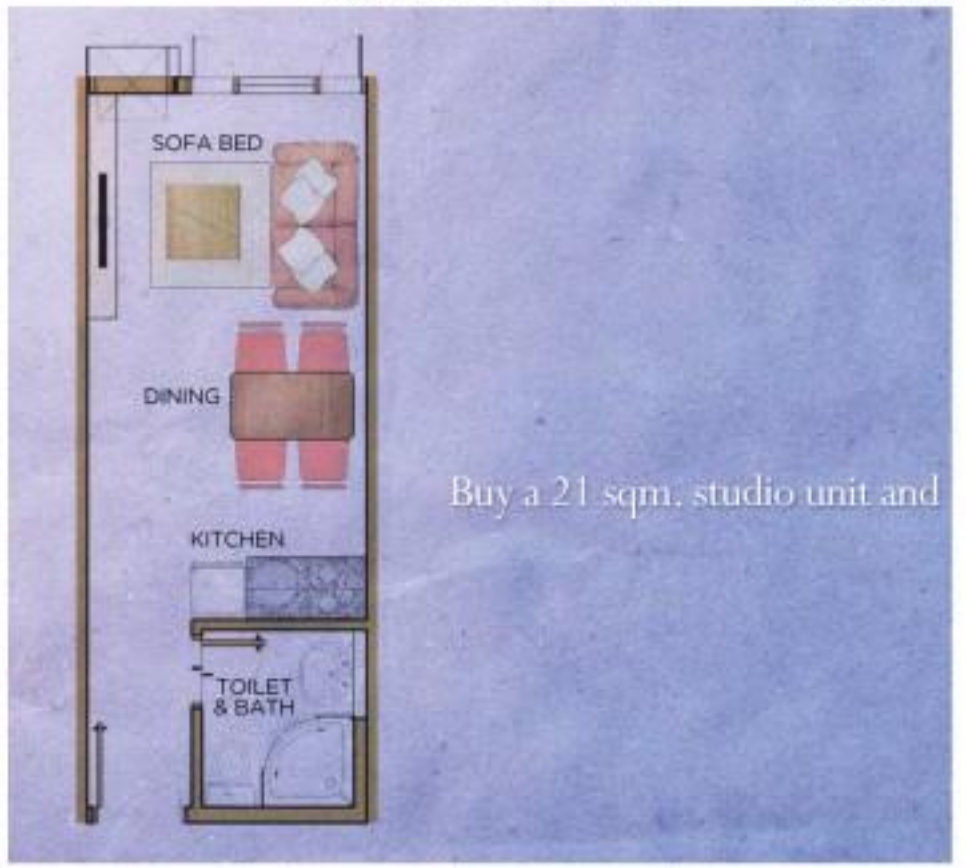
Peso/$

STOCK MARKET

Stocks close lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B5)



SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Editor Cesar D. Mangosing

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Science centers must be supported

By Charles E. Bukar

A SCIENCE CENTER may be defined as a science museum featuring interactive exhibits that encourage visitors to experiment and explore.

In contrast to traditional museums, a science center mainly encourages its visitors to put their hands on, eyes on, ears on and minds on while they are operating the interactive exhibits.

Subic Bay's permanent exhibits, a science center, on a regular basis, also displays temporary thematic exhibitions on various science topics or even conduct out-of-town activities via roving exhibits.

Ilkka Tor Ilo Per Rikrin Persson, chief executive officer of Heureka Science Center of Finland, a science center does so much more for the community it serves.

Under Persson's leadership, Heureka has become a world-renowned science center that has been visited by more than 1.6 million people from all over the world.

Level of interest

"In our previous studies, the level of interest in science and technology, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, income, education and gender increases significantly just by visiting a science center. The individuals in these studies increased as if no said they had learned more of their science and/or technology during the time they visited a science center as compared to just attending their classes at school," reported Persson who recently visited the country as guest speaker of Science Café.

The Science Café is a regular event organized by the Philippine Foundation for Science and Technology and Asian Institute of Management Policy Center.

"There are also other studies that reported on the effect that science centers have on students' career choice. In fact, one study found that extracurricular science activities encouraged students to study science at school and to pursue science careers," said Persson.

Another study found that students already studying for science based careers have been a previous regular science center visitors.

Needed

"Why are we saying all these? It is because any country needs scientists from almost all disciplines to fuel its economy. Science plays an important part to any country's change from an economy reliant on commodities and exports, to one based on knowledge and technology," Persson explained.

He added that the presence of a science center could have a big impact on learning and even on local economies since they are not only becoming prime tourist attractions in their areas but also perform significant services to the formal education sector.

Persson lauded the Philippine Foundation for Science and Technology as well as its partners—the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Education, and Bicentennial Development Corp.—for continuously supporting the country's first interactive science center museum, the Philippine Science Centrum.

Established in 1998, the PSC is at present located on a 2,300-square-meter exhibition hall at the back of Marikina Riverbanks Center's Building D.

The area was donated by its founder, engineer Meinrado Cirlos, president and chair of the Philippine Foundation for Science and Technology, who is also the president of Marikina Riverbanks Center.

3M visitors

With 11 galleries that feature 150 interactive exhibits, the PSC has already welcomed close to 3 million visitors.

"It is also great to know that PSC is ever evolving not to be jaded audience by moving around the country though to traveling exhibitions," Persson noted.

This moving exhibition has already reached 96 cities and towns around the country and has already attracted 2.2 million visitors.

"This is important because amid political and economical concerns that will surely obstruct the ability of a developing country to advance in science and technology, this widening the gap between knowledge-rich countries and knowledge-poor countries, each predicaments should not be allowed to dampen a country's goal to harness scientific and technological advancements to enhance social well-being," Persson stressed.

PERSSON

Breathing the most basic thing in human survival

By Phaelen D. Salazar
Contributor

WHILE PEOPLE GET SO ENTHUSIASTIC about getting health resolutions—exercising as often as possible, eating the right food and adopting the latest fad diet—they often forget the most basic thing to human survival: breathing.

For years now, a breathing method developed by a Russian doctor has been taught in the Philippines by long-time Buteyko certified practitioner Ate Vidjen. The Buteyko method or Buteyko breathing technique consists of relaxation about the principles of optimal breathing plus a set of breathing exercises that focus on nasal breathing, managed breath holding and relaxation.

Overbreathing

According to Vidjen, a person takes about 20,000-30,000 breaths in a day. The common misconception is the more a person breathes the better.

But overbreathing will lead to certain sickness, Vidjen said. "The product can be manifested depending on the genetic predisposition," he explained. "If you have a genetic predisposition for asthma, then it will be manifested to asthma."

Overbreathing can be done without. When people get tired the tendency is to sit down followed by excessive breathing or catching of breath.

Constant stress makes a person breathe deeper unconsciously and it becomes a habit. When the body gets used to lower levels of carbon dioxide, the respiratory systems then allows a person to breathe more than he needs to.

Illness such as asthma, allergies, depression and anxiety attacks are associated with irregular breathing patterns. Buteyko's method is designed to let people learn how to breathe more in a natural pattern.

"Shallow breathing through the nose is the key to ease the illnesses," Vidjen said.

The Buteyko method was developed by Russian doctor, Konstantin Pavlovich Buteyko, some 50 years ago. He died in 2003 in his 80s.

3 core principles

The three core principles of Buteyko are reduced breathing, nasal breathing and relaxation.

Since stress causes excessive breathing, Buteyko is meant to reduce its volume. To check this Buteyko has an exercise called Control Pause (CP) or the time a person can easily pause after a light exhalation. Vidjen said the measurement depends on the person's needs. This is one of the reasons he discourages doing Buteyko without supervision from practitioners.

There will be free breathercise lectures on Jan. 22 at 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at Infocomm Community Service, 4th A. McKinley Road, Forbes Park (Compound), Makati City; and on Jan. 23 from 7 to 9 p.m. at PhilHOMBA Homeopathy Center, 70 Salvador St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

A GIFT OF HOPE FOR MEMENCIA R. ARNAIZ'S FAMILY The Philippine Chinese Charitable Association Inc. led by Dr. James G. Dy, its chair and president, and the Filipino Chinese Goodwill Chamber of Commerce Inc., headed by Floranio Dy, its president, in joint effort with the United Daily News, present Christmas gifts and cash donations to the four sons of Memencia R. Arnaiz-Alcaraz who was murdered to face the firing squad in Taiwan for alleged robbery and murder of her employer. Both organizations are spearheading a campaign to appeal the granting of clemency to Arnaiz-Alcaraz. From left are: Cheng Sui'Wei, and Cheng Eng Bio (both from UDN), Floranio Dy (FCGCCI), Dy Fiona (UDN chair), Dr. James G. Dy (PCCAI), Ibrahim, Jhervene, Aaron and Ephraim A. Alcaraz (Arnaiz's children), Jimmy Cheng (UDN) and Jesus Arnaiz (oldest brother).

Suffer a key change

BIRDS DO IT, WHALES DO IT, AND AS Cornell University researchers have learned, even the mosquitoes that carry dengue and yellow fever do it, too.

Entomologists Laurens Gaine and her colleagues at the Illinois, New York incubation think there's a way to use the Aedes aegypti mosquito's mating duet as a way to control the species' population.

The World Health Organization estimates 40 percent of the world's population is at risk of being infected with dengue virus carried by these mosquitoes, and some 500,000 people annually infected, many people die from it; to date, public health departments rely heavily on preventative measures such as covering open water containers or the A. aegypti mosquito's breed.

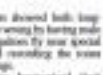
In the process of coming up with the idea of using the mosquitoes' promising tendency to harmonize with each other against themselves, the Cornell researchers also dispelled a couple of long held beliefs about the hearing abilities of males and females of the species.

"At the very least, our findings open the door to a new understanding of their mating behavior," the team of entomologists and neurobiologists wrote in their study published online Jan. 8 in the Science Express website of the journal Science.

Conclusion

For over 30 years, scientists studying the A. aegypti mosquito concluded that the males couldn't hear anything above 800 Hz, while the females couldn't hear anything at all.

"The auditory physiology on A. aegypti, here, provides the first direct evidence that females can hear and join in our 'newlywed wisdom' that females are deaf," Gaine and her colleagues wrote in their study.



DISCOVER

Marcos Santos Ballve

The researchers devised both long held notions were wrong by having male and female mosquitoes fly near special microphones and recording the room inside by their wings.

The researchers harmonized their wing beat frequencies when they got within a few centimeters of each other. The flight tone adjustments went down by both sexes, rather than just the males, as would have been the case if the females were deaf.

The researchers also implanted tiny electrodes into the mosquitoes' hearing organs to learn more about their tone range of hearing. They found that the mosquitoes responded to frequencies up to 2,000 Hertz.

In comparison, the human hearing range is between roughly 20 and 20,000 Hz. A dog can hear sounds made between 15 and 50,000 Hz.

Observation

The researchers noted that after mating for the first time, female mosquitoes become less inclined to perform any more mating duets and thus help boost the mosquito population.

Gaine, Mitchell and Cator and her colleagues to suggest releasing sterile males to mate with the virgin females in a means of controlling the A. aegypti mosquito population. This method has been tested successfully in other species of flies.

Gaine and her colleagues assert the only issue interested in finding out more other species' hearing ranges and the potential impact of such information. Last year researchers in San Diego, California started studying the true range of hearing in polar bears. As the bears' Icy Arctic home continues to melt, allowing humans to increase their activities in the region, the researchers wonder how the acoustic ways of life might be affected by the changes.

Tests done with polar bears in captivity have revealed that the bears are more sensitive to sounds than humans. They can hear at frequencies and sound levels human ears just don't register. The researchers' interest is indeed as natural behavior though as they aren't sure what these findings will mean for the polar bears in the Arctic regions, and how the animals will react to the increasing noise around them.

E-mail the author at mssais@msnbc.com.

A healthy eating lifestyle

IT CAN NEVER BE OVEREMPHASIZED how important it is to develop healthy eating habits. We are what we eat. But more than that, we are also how we eat.

My favorite nutrition guru Santosse Tirtajaya, who writes a regular column for THE Health & Lifestyle says that we should not wait for our doctors to tell us that our blood chemistries are alarming before we take it upon ourselves to correct whatever unhealthy eating habits we have.

Losing weight or having better food choices or starting an exercise program are examples but important decisions we make ourselves, Santosse advises.

If we're not strongly motivated, we'll have a tough time making those eating decisions. But healthy eating does not really mean slowly restraining on calories or depriving oneself of the foods one enjoys to eat. One can still choose foods that are both nourishing and enjoyable to eat.

We must also avoid eating simply because it's time to eat. Avoid eating out when you tell yourself: "It is dinner time and I'm not hungry. I just had a heavy merienda but it's the only family meal we have so I'll have to eat again." Cut the nonsense if you're still full, Santosse says.

Five-minute rule

A second serving is always a temptation we can hardly resist. Santosse advises the "Five-minute Rule." Wait for five minutes before you go back for a second serving, or wait a while until the nagging thought of that pastry passes.

Many of us are also acting like "food dispensers." We should not stock up on problem foods such as chocolate chip cookies, potato chips, peanuts and chicharon. Better yet, keep them out of sight all the time. "They're too tempting for members," Santosse says.

When one says, "I'll save this for the kids," one usually ends up keeping and eating some for oneself.

Other pointers

Here are other pointers from Santosse to help us increase our eating awareness quotient.

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo, M.D.

1 Focus on developing healthy eating habits such as not "battering" your food for a week, or taking water instead of regular soft drinks.

2 Identify eating triggers in your environment. These could include having constant visitors at home, serving snacks all the time, having your own personal refrigerator in the room, or having some candy and cookie jars along the hallways or near your bed.

3 Identify the behavior change you need. Inside such as eating junk food while watching TV, bringing a chocolate bar to work, or indulging in ice cream every time you're stressed.

4 Avoid the "food economics" mentality such as eating every body's leftovers just because you feel guilty thinking of all people who are starving.

5 Buy foods that require preparation. Make a delicious pasta from scratch, not those packed mixes that need only hot water. Practice one dish at a time.

6 Keep your refrigerator looking like a garden with lots of enticing vegetables and attractive fresh fruits to pick on like elephants and cute calves.

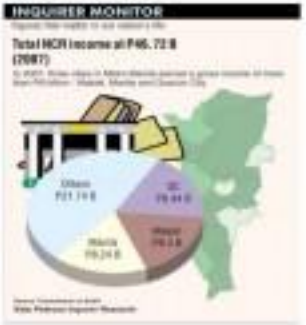
7 Interrupt the eating behavior chain of fatty foods by serving more vegetables, salads and pasta instead of four to five kinds of rich meat dishes. Your family might complain at first but don't be discouraged. They'll eventually like the change.

8 Prepare menus for special events to advance and keep in mind to serve healthy, instead of the usual fatty dishes. Serve more pastas and noodles with more vegetables instead of meat-based sauces. Forget fatkos. Instead, serve baked turkey or roast chicken complete with all the extra fixings.

Do you still see smart and healthy eating choices for foods are out. This should be a great way to enjoy the new year.

Rate hike freeze perils Manila Water's expansion program

Firm wants to boost sewerage, waste water services



By Doris C. Dumlao

THE KOALA-CUSTOMOLLIES Manila Water Co. is keen on doubling its capital spending this year to about P10 billion from a year ago, but a potential deferment of a water rate increase in the country could curb long-run investment outlays.

MWC chief finance officer Luis Juan Oreta yesterday said the company had committed to raise capital spending particularly to boost sewerage and waste water services. But of the capital spending needed for this year was already covered by proceeds from a P4-billion bond flotation last year.

While the company currently relies mostly on revenues from water distribution, he said waste water services could be a source of revenue growth once aptly factored in water tariff setting. "We're covering the next phase of our capital spending. The less risky bit," Oreta said.

Indications that regulators may not sanction a water tariff increase this year would not have an immediate impact but he said this could prompt the company to rethink future outlays.

"But we're hoping this will be resolved soon," Oreta said. Under the concession agreement, he said there's a schedule of tariff adjustment that must be followed.

It was earlier reported that the company is seeking an increase in water distribution fees by a total of P6.50 a cubic meter starting this month.

The East Zone handled by the concessionaire encompasses 23 cities and municipalities, including parts of Makati, San Juan, Taguig, Pateros, Antipolo, San Mateo, Rodriguez, Montalina, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati and most of Quezon City and covers approximately 1,400 square kilometers. MWC also manages and operates the sewerage system that covers a portion of its service area and provides sanitation services to its customers in the East Zone.

Out of the programmed capital spending for this year, about P6 billion was intended to be spent for water sewer services, he said.

Metro P6 billion will go to water supply, pipe replacement and expansion to new areas which are still part of the east zone, like Retal," Oreta said.

"There are still some underserved communities," he said.

Given the difficult economic environment, Oreta said MWC would also want to mitigate the impact of water tariff increases on consumers. As such, it had proposed to extend the life of the concession for 10 more years.

The company bagged the 25-year concession agreement in 1997 as part of the state-owned Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's privatization of water services management.

Customs exceeds '08 collection target by 2.4%

By Gemma M. Dumlao

CUSTOMS COLLECTIONS REACHED P268.08 billion in 2008, P6.2 billion or 2.4 percent higher than the target for the year.

Reynaldo V. Umali, deputy commissioner at the Bureau of Customs, said in an interview that the agency was aiming to collect P529.4 billion for the year.

The customs revenue in 2008 was 21.0 percent higher than the P519.51 billion posted in 2007.

"We did very well in our collection of our expenditure listed (P529 which we collected 002.96 billion, as against our target of 07.34 billion," Umali said. "That's an excess of P34.43 billion."

The national government allocates a budget for the BIR yearly which is used to help raise tax from semi-duties and taxes in the Bureau of Customs and of Internal Revenue.

The subsidies given to some agencies are usually disbursed from its budget for the succeeding year as state-owned firms are not exempted from paying taxes and import duties.

Umali said the agency would increase its revenue program for 2009 to P537 billion or about a quarter higher than last year's target.

"That's a tall order," he said. "There were various macroeconomic factors that were considered to arrived at that figure, but this was before the financial meltdown."

"We are hoping that target at this time since this is what we have registered to Congress," the official added. "But I guess we will have to adjust the figure."

He explained that amendments in the Customs revenue program were allowed especially when there were extraordinary circumstances that would affect collection.

Asked what is the latest number would be for 2009 collections, Umali said: "P266 billion or thereabouts, a flat growth from the 2008 figure."

Farm sector growth slowed to 3.92% in '08

From page B1

phoons, climate change (which altered planting periods and set down hardwood) and high fuel prices during the first semester of 2008.

Early last year, after announcing a 4.6% palayan growth in farm output, the government aimed for an expansion of 4.5-5.5 percent in the agriculture sector, which contributes about 20 percent of the country's gross domestic production.

But the forecast was tempered toward the end of 2008 as fertilizer prices increased and the global financial crisis made credit less available to farmers.

The government aims to keep economic growth between 4 and 5 percent from an earlier target of 6 to 7 percent. The country achieved a 11-year high growth of 7.3 percent in 2007.

Top said he expected the agriculture sector to fare better in 2009 as prices of commonly used fertilizers began to drop by as much as 50 percent at the start of the year, pulled by softening crude oil prices in the world market.

Finance pushes higher ...

From page B1

P58 billion in the third year and from P60 billion to P70 billion yearly in the following years.

"This proposal is probably the most acceptable to the Filipino public of all the proposed revenue enhancement measures because we are increasing the tax on vices," Teves said.

He cited a a Social Weather Stations survey commissioned by the Department of Health, which showed that 82 percent of Filipinos were in favor of increasing cigarette tax.

"We believe that there is room for an increase in the excise tax on alcohol and tobacco," Teves said. "We debunk the tobacco makers' battles in the Philippines is among the lowest in the region."

He added that the global trend points to a simplified excise tax structure and the reduction of the tax rate to it. Reuters

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As approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas on 08 January 2009, Philippine National Bank advises Noteholders of its Series A & B Tier 2 Notes of its exercise of the Call Option and hereby redeems all of the outstanding Notes amounting to Php 2,865,000,000 (Series A) and Php 135,000,000 (Series B) on the Call Option Date.

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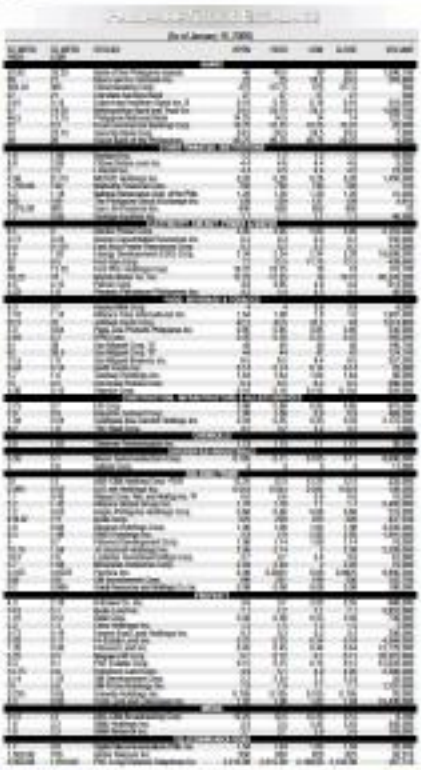
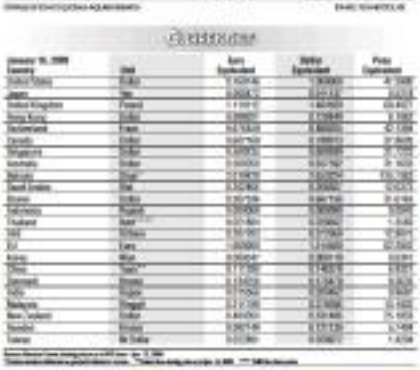
Please contact Ms. Janelle Vivien R. Reyes or Adora A. Yanga of Banco de Oro Unibank, Inc. Trust & Investment Group Stock Transfer Department at telephone numbers 878-4053 and 878-4052,respectively.

(Sgd.) Carmen G. Huang, EVP & CFO
Philippine National Bank





Invest

Licaros firm gets SC noo in Palawan mine dispu

By Doris C. Dumlao

OLYMPIC MINES AND
ment Corp., a firm owned b
ily of former Central Bank
Gregorio Licaros Sr., has
favorable verdict from the
Court, upholding its claim
parcel 2,299-hectare mini
Palawan.

The resolution was issue
high court's First Division on

The ruling paves the w
docket Mines and De
Corp.—a subsidiary of pub
Oriental Peninsula Resour
Inc. and Olympic's "success
rel"... to take over the mining
ental Peninsula and is a wo
urday.

Olympic consolidated ow
the subject site is San Jo
and Pulot, Espanola, all lo
Palawan in 1956. These ind
were previously owned by C
Blanco Atlantic City Explora
de Exploration and Deve
ration.

In 2005, then-chairman Ben
Exploration Co. filed an appli
ering the same mines held b
ily then, Olympic had transf
ership of the mine sites to Cla

Ermex countered Olympic
ch entered production sha
ment (MPSA), claiming
Palawan site was closed to
pleration since these were
by Atlantic, Manila and Fore

The Mines and Geoscien
and Department of Environ
Natural Resources panel of
rejected Ermex' claim. Ermex
vided the case to the Court
which likewise junked the pe

ments in RP seen to rise in '09

Exports also expected to beat bleak forecasts

By Abigail L. Ho

DESPITE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS WELL not stop investments from flowing into the country this year, with inflation expected to reach P450 billion, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

In a presentation before local business groups and foreign chambers, Trade Secretary Peter Favila said projects registered with the Board of Investments (BOI) should bring in P200 billion in investments, while those under the Philippine Economic Zone Authority should contribute another P170 billion.

However, the P280 billion is expected BOI investments for the year would be roughly the same as last year's P268.4 billion.

Projected Peza investments, meanwhile, represented a growth of around 10 percent from the P153.8 billion figure registered last year.

The biggest contributors to the investments sector last year were the electricity, gas and water supply sector with P120.9 billion; the real estate, renting and business activities sector with P110.2 billion; and the manufacturing sector with P90.25 billion.

Last year's approved investments, once operational, should generate 150,000 new jobs.

Local businesses accounted for 63 percent of last year's investments at P279.3 billion. Foreign investors accounted for the remainder of the pie with P164 billion.

This year, Favila said more investments were expected to be inked into the information technology and business process outsourcing (IBPO) sectors.

Quoting estimates made by the Business Process Association of the Philippines, he said investments in the IT-BPO sector should expand by 20 to 30 percent this year.

Also, exports are expected to expand by 5 percent this year to $66.1 billion, despite the weakening of the economies of the country's main trading partners, Favila said.

Services exports—which included BPO, tourism and game product development—may account for the bulk of this growth, with a projected contribution of $36.1 billion, 60 percent better than its 2008 contribution of $11.7 billion, he added.

SIMPLE. Soliongh, we expect the full effects of the global crisis to happen this year, as it has already been felt by a number of our revenue stream exports, we have made some adjustments to deliver these efforts," Favila said.

Last year, exports came in generally with services also topping the list of contributors.

EDC invests ₱317M for rig improvements

THE LOPEZ-LED ENERGY DEVELOPMENT Corp. (EDC) has spent more than P317 million to upgrade its existing rigs and to partially pay for the purchase of a new one, in a bid to become more globally competitive in the drilling industry.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, EDC chief financial officer Bernie Rodriguez said the cash used for these investments came from the balance of the company's P9.28-billion initial public offering proceeds.

She said that as of end-September 2008, EDC had more than P1 billion in unused initial public offering (IPO) proceeds, part of which the company spent in the fourth quarter.

Of the total P317.1 million spent in the October-December 2008 period, she said P107.8 million went to the 20-percent advance payment for the purchase of a brand new 1,500-horsepower diesel-electric drilling rig.

Another P119.2 million was used to pay Yoco Corp. for a top-drive assembly, full reconditioning of the rig, set of testing and commissioning cost.

As of end-2008, EDC's unused IPO proceeds amounted to P909.2 million.

In the third quarter of 2008, the company spent P186.3 million of its IPO proceeds for various projects that would further strengthen its position in the geothermal industry, both here and abroad.

The bulk of the IPO proceeds spent in the July-September 2008 period, or P138.9 million, went to expenditures for the Mindanao III Geothermal Project.

Also getting huge chunks of the proceeds were the Tanawon Geothermal Project, at P45.1 million, and the Bacon Geothermal Project, at P22.6 million.

EDC also earmarked close to P9.6 million for the upgrade of its drilling rigs as well as for the purchase of a new rig.

Another P542,872 was spent for the Nasuji Geothermal Project.

The Tanawon and Bacon projects in Albay and Southern Negros, respectively, each has the potential to generate 40 megawatts (MW) of power, while the Nasuji project in Negros Oriental may add another 20 MW to overall grid capacity.

The Mindanao III project in Lanao is may boost capacity in the Mindanao grid by 53 MW. Abigail L. Ho

Paving the way for trade, contested Meralco shares quarantined

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE DEPOSITORY AND Trust Corp. has isolated the disputed shares of the Manila Electric Co., paving the way for the resumption of trading of the distribution utility's shares after almost a month of suspension.

Meralco corporate secretary Emmanuel Rivera, in a letter-agreement addressed to PDTC chair and chief executive Vicente Castello, said the disputed Joselito Lichtica shares should no longer serve as an obstacle to trading resumption as these had already been quarantined.

Rivera explained that, of the 42 million disputed shares, 40.6 million shares were lodged by Lichtica with the PDTC, while the remaining 1.4 million shares remained overtly registered under Lichtica's name and not lodged with the PDTC.

Of the 40.6 million, PDTC lodged disputed shares, close to 5.4 million were routed in the Philippine Stock Exchange and settled through the Securities Clearing Corp. of the Philippines.

There are no longer to the accounts of PDTC's lodging brokers.

More than 37.2 million shares, meanwhile, remain in the depository accounts of PDTC's lodging brokers, and these have already been subjected to PDTC's quarantine procedures.

"PDTC has declared that the marketability of all Meralco shares lodged in the depository has been cured and that, therefore, the Meralco shares lodged in the depository have once again become totally and fully free as to the settlement of trades in the PSE and other depository transactions," Rivera said in a statement yesterday.

"In consideration of such declaration, Meralco, through Chemical Securities Transfer Services Inc., shall not acclaim the lodgment of any or all of these quarantined shares, except in accordance with a final and/or executory order issued by the proper government agency or instrumentality or court of competent jurisdiction resolving the dispute," he added.

Upon PDTC's conformity to Meralco's letter agreement, he said Meralco shares should again become eligible for trading in the PSE.

PSE president Francis Lim had earlier said PSE management would be working with Meralco and PDTC to resume the trading of shares not involved in the dispute between the Land Bank of the Philippines and an agrarian reform claimant.

Meralco late last year canceled more than 42 million Meralco stock certificates held by Landbank and issued new ones to one Joselito Lichtica.

Lichtica is an assignee of Federico Buning who is among claimants of a piece of agricultural land in Occidental Mindoro that had been expropriated under the land reform program and valued by the Department of Agrarian Reform at P4.25 million.

What it (really) means to be green

NEW YEAR, NEW LIFE? TO BEGIN again... Holding up the last time... There are some of the ancient thoughts that come to mind when one starts out in a new year. They help us look back and see what we have accomplished and failed to do as we continue to struggle and improve hoping to do better in the next 12 months.

On another front, one might also say that these thoughts apply equally to the environment and how we have treated Mother Earth.

Are we better off now in energy self-sufficiency? Despite government support, has the business sector taken serious initiatives to build energy-efficient projects? Or are they making false claims for marketing gimmicks to get more business?

What about water? Have we started reducing water? Or do we continue to waste and pollute this very vital resource? Can we claim that summer life is back in many of our waterways? Are they safe for swimming or drinking?

In Manila still listed as one of the most polluted cities in the world? Our New Year's Eve fireworks didn't help at all in this area, despite government attempts by the government to ban fireworks.

Let's stop for a while and give a really honest evaluation. Should we get a passing or a failing grade? What should we have done better? Or is the situation helpless? What do you think?

Craving for many things

In today's world, we crave for many things that are supposed to make our life more comfortable. We think we should have multiple cars, appliances and televisions sets in our houses. We claim that these are basic necessities. What we do not realize is the extent of energy wasted and its effect on the environment.

People have been bombarded with a lot of hype about green buildings and green technologies. They often read about solar panels, wind turbines, energy-saving lamps, green materials, etc. What many people do not realize is that being green is not merely installing technical gadgets into their buildings while continuing with their waste-

GREEN ARCHETRENDS

Antonio de Jesus

ful lifestyles.

Being green is more about adopting a green lifestyle than using green technologies.

Let me cite a few examples. What is the point of using energy-efficient lamps in our homes if we turn them on even if no one is in the room? This is comparable to eating of fuel-efficient car with pure driving and maintenance habits.

Even al Gore, the former American Vice President, who won an Oscar award for his documentary on climate change "The Inconvenient Truth," was highly criticized for his 20-room mansion which consumes more energy in a month than the average American household in an entire year. Talk about lifestyle.

Another example would be to put a green building in the middle of nowhere hundreds of kilometers away from the nearest public transportation. We must see how the place is designed. Is it built responsibly. Some people call this urban sprawl.

Solar panels now are getting more popular, although the price is still very steep for most people; it has generated a lot of interest. Again, many people tend to think that it is the cure-all for energy needs. Many projects aim to install these devices without considering the efficient design of the house where they will be installed. Result? Many solar panels are installed because more energy is necessary to handle excessive requirements.

Adopting green lifestyle

A very good example of adopting a green lifestyle is best shown to the farming and cooking needs of building occupants. For temperate countries, people are picking on extra warm clothing to minimize mixing the two measures done, saving energy and for winter countries, retaining light, airy clothes help to ward building occupants without lowering the thermostat since, to cut down on energy use.

There are other examples that all have tools with changing our ways to a greener lifestyle. For example, using shower stalls instead of bathtubs and eliminating the use of expensive and water-intensive grass for our gardens and lawns can greatly reduce water use.

Using task lighting like table lamps instead of illuminating the whole room can be a practical way to save electricity.

The best way to be green starts with the design of one's home. Considering that buildings and homes consume about 70 percent of the world's energy, it makes sense to do it right as early as possible during the design stages of the project.

The next one for a green building is its energy consumption. This is easily measured in your electricity bill. For those planning to build their homes and buildings this year, try to find an architect who can really evaluate your needs based on green architecture principles. A green architect will help you reduce costs through substantial energy savings.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail antoniodejesus@gmail.com.

ARTIST'S perspective of Ariana

Mahogany Place 3 the home of your dreams

IT'S NOT SURPRISING TO SEE PEOPLE paying a premium on owning their own home and lot. But since there are only so many hectares available in the metro for subdivisions, most developers are now going up to provide families the homes they need.

One such development is the Mahogany Place 3, a subdivision development of DMCI Homes in Sta Tesang-Gen Trias in Tagaig that aims to offer discriminating families the house and lot units they are looking for.

"Mahogany Place 3 is the newest subdivision in prime Makati and the Bonifacio Global City," says DMCI Homes' Business Development Director Ray C. Infante. "It is also probably our last subdivision development in the area because the rest of the development is quite prohibitive. For that reason, Mahogany Place 3 is really an exclusive development."

Assessment

Patty Sison, project development manager of DMCI Homes, explains that many people going into subdivisions store there are no actual land titles attached to it.

Sakmar confirms such an assessment, saying, "Some of our customers acquired properties for their children either as a wedding gift or so that the units don't fetch very handsome rental rates when they're already in bloom, they choose to get a house and lot at the Mahogany Place 3 in mind—for the same price," he says.

Successful business executives, top corporate workers, well-to-do's are the home of their dreams at Mahogany Place 3. Upscale, noble and with a level of refined taste, they know what they want, value time with their family and look for security, comfort and convenience.

Mahogany Place 3 would also be an excellent investment for half-Filipinos and professionals working abroad. By buying a home at Mahogany Place 3, they will be able to provide loved ones a home to a secured environment with the comforts and conveniences that may only be found at Mahogany Place 3.

Low-density community

Mahogany Place 3 is a low-density Asian-themed residential enclave that offers a quality pedestrian environment and landscaped community spaces for affluent families with comparable taste.

Only a limited number of house and lots are available within the property's eight-hectare expanse. The spacious layout of a low-density community with 24-hour security, a gated entrance and electrified perimeter fence its design of twelve (12) awesome nodes make around Mahogany Place 3 possible, while perfect gardens and public spaces bring nature close to you.

A central area houses the Grand Clubhouse with recovery club-like amenities including a mini fitness, sauna, dance room and fitness gym, lounge in sun and both adult and kiddie pools.

There are four unit types available for Mahogany Place 3: Tamara, a 138-square meter, three-storey duplex unit; Bella, a 200-sq/m, two-storey single-detached unit; Isleta, a 120-sq/m, three-storey duplex unit; and Isla, a 280-sq/m, three-storey single-detached unit. Tamara and Bella offer fixed designs, while homeowners have the option to customize the Isleta and Isla units to suit their needs.

Both the Tamara and Bella units have large windows and floor openings, while Isabellas on the upper floors, landscaped frontage and decking means that natural to a garden. Over at the Bella unit, the upper hallway may easily be transformed into a study area, and the master bedroom features a separate balcony area.

There is also an extra bedroom at the Bella unit located at the ground floor, so by the end of the day, kids and lola need no longer climb the stairs to sleep. One of its unique features is the kitchen which has a center island that also doubles as a cocktail bar and preparation area to give the homeowners more room for entertaining guests.

Megaworld upbeat, unveils Greenbills Heights

MEGAWORLD CORP. REMAINS UPBEAT with the real estate industry's prospects for this year despite the global financial crisis. As such, the country's No. 1 residential condominium developer recently launched a small condominium cluster in San Juan City.

The project, Greenbills Heights, will rise across the historic Pinaglabanan Shrine. Megaworld recently opened the project's showroom with San Juan City Mayor JV Ejercito as guest of honor.

"Greenbills Heights is an ideal home for starting families since it is quite near the Ortigas business district and boasts proximity to some of the metro's best primary and secondary schools such as La Salle Greenhills, CIS Montessori and Xavier School," Megaworld SVP for Marketing and project head Hudson Adamat said.

Small community

Greenbills Heights is composed of four mid-rise residential towers. This small community will feature only 160 units. Prices range from P3.3 to P5.6 million for a one-bedroom unit (40 square meters) to P6.1-P4.7 million (60 sq m).

"With only four towers and only 160 units, we expect a tightly-knit community in Greenbills Heights. Residents will surely get to know their neighbors very well," Adamat declared.

Among the amenities that residents will enjoy at Greenbills Heights are a clubhouse, children's playground, swimming and wading pools, podium gardens and a gazebo.

Strong demand

Considering its prime location in the geographic center of the metro, Megaworld is expecting a strong demand for Greenbills Heights among investors and end-user families. The project may break ground early next year and turnover is set for 2011.

Starting families may call 721-7800 ext 6759 for more information on Greenbills Heights. Or check out www.megaworld.com.ph.

SAN Juan City Mayor JV Ejercito with actress Dina Bonnevie and Megaworld Commercial Division head Kevin Belmonte during the opening of the Greenbills Heights showroom

GREENHILLS Heights is ideally located on the periphery of the metro, in San Juan City.

LANTANA LANE BLESSING

Mahona Properties Inc. recently had the blessing of its flagship project Lantana Lane in Caloocan. Lantana Homes in New Manila, Quezon City. Designed by architect Francisco "Bobby" Mañosa, the boutique low-density development of 16 exclusively townhouses sits on a 2,000 square meter property. Each unit has a floor area of almost 400 sqm with 3 floors, 4 full bedrooms with walk-in closets and toilet and bath, a rooftop entertainment area with optional jacuzzi and roof garden plus separate quarters for the maid and driver with a toilet and bath. Shown are Mahona Properties CEO Cleo Mañosa and architect Francisco Mañosa, chair of the board of Mahona & Co. and Mahona Properties.

Celadon Manila benefits from city's flood control project

SPEARHEADED BY EEE SAMA flagship (Manila, District X), the construction of a new drainage system near the area of Abreu Land's Celadon Manila was completed recently.

Started in August, the project included replacing the existing 600 mm-diameter pipes with much larger 1700 mm diameter concrete ones to assist in excess water management area due to the effects of Ondoy and the improvements of Pedro Pardo and Highways as well as the Manila Jockey Club Inc.

"Being Abreu Land's first foray in Manila, Celadon Manila is trying to develop the property in a way that not only answers its future residents' modern lifestyle essentials but aims as a benchmark that adapts to the needs of the city's landscape," says Jesse M. Abreu, president of Abreu Land.

Going down bigger pipes to clear drainage lines was in accordance with recommendations given by engineering consultancy firm Wood-Fields Consultants Inc. and Basic Technology and Management Corp. in their study called "Study on Existing Drainage Laterals in Metro Manila" which was aimed at assessing the flooding situations in Metro Manila and coming up with measures to solve it.

Simultaneously, the Metro Manila Development Authority have similar projects that complement the efforts of DPWH, the local government and Celadon Manila by opening the newly-built drainage and Vitas pumping stations to intercept water coming from the Bloemen river area.

With the new drainage system in place since October, no major incident of flooding has been observed in the area, especially at the main entrance gate of Celadon Residences.

FORBES MAGAZINE FETES ANCHOR LAND

Forbes Asia Magazine has cited specific developer Anchor Land Holdings Inc., a local Philippine company, as one of the 200 best firms in the Asia-Pacific region for the prestigious list. Shown during the recent award ceremonies in Sorsogon, Singapore are (from left) Alfi Chua Singson Lee, Forbes Magazine Editor in Chief Steve Forbes, Anchor Assistant Vice President for Sales and Marketing Elizabeth Yenson and Vice Chair Stone Li.

PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Manglosang

RP property sector optimistic, realistic in 2009

By Tonyo R. Salazar

IF THE SEERS ARE bullish in the year of the ox, so are realtors and property developers. And as property analysts see the bright and gloomy spots, real estate players and real estate-related companies are seeing the gray areas as opportunities.

Alejandro E. Medalac, president of the National Real Estate Association, said the recent movements of more experienced developers, which he described as those who have been in the business for at least 20 years and have experienced at least 3 economic "cycles" and worse crises, suggest that the latest financial situation is still "almost business as usual."

He added that these experienced developers are still launching "new but carefully conceptualized (projects) focused on very specific real estate target markets."

Medalac said the difference between the Philippines and its first world counterparts is that "we are more experienced, if not 'expects' when it comes to crises. With each crisis under different periods and different administrations, we have had valuable learnings that have caused reforms in our banking and economic policies."

He added that unlike "the most recent economic turmoil (in 1997) where the Philippines got the 'flu' almost the day after our neighbors had it, catching an unexpected, now we are seeing it approaching and giving us time to prepare."

Medalac said that while it is true that sales for luxurious condominium projects have slowed down, the "real" need for housing, especially for the middle to low-cost markets, is very much present.

"It is the availability of financing for these first home-buyers that will move this market. Investors now should actually look at buying mid-rate condominium projects, either to flip or to have them leased in the future," he said.

Usual tendency

"The usual tendency of investors is to look at properties/projects/units from their own perspective, from their high standards, from their personal tastes. But actually, a rich buyer can consider investing in low-cost projects and even buy several units since the demand will always be there for these type of projects," he added.

According to Medalac, another market that can be considered are the foreign investors who are looking for alternatives other than the United States and Europe. He said that Asia appeals to them as a good choice and the relatively stable economy in the Philippines is definitely an attraction for them.

"Even Fitch's ratings show a positive and stable outlook for the Philippine economy and real estate has always been proven as the safest investment. In fact, real estate is the only investment where there are no mistakes which cannot be corrected by time because of appreciation." He advises players to "go for the real-user markets."

But just like Global Property Guide's prediction that many nations, particularly the local real estate sector, that rely heavily on the international market are supposed to be the most severely affected by the global financial crisis, property player Jose Ramon Puyat III, president of EDGE Properties-Investcon Cove, has a similar opinion.

Reasons

Puyat said he believes that any strategy that continues to target overseas buyers would most likely fail-or become:

• Where people have lost a significant amount of their investments, there is no further incentive, nor available funds, to use for additional purchases such as real estate.

• Most overseas Filipinos are heavy investors in the stock market, which includes their 401K, or their retirement account. With the global meltdown to all equities markets (the US and European markets in particular) our amounts of capital, including that of the OFWs, have been lost.

• Many overseas buyers have already borrowed against their home equity to finance their purchase of additional property investments.

• Now that the value of their loans are much more than the value of their collateral (as a result of the steep drop in the RE housing market), they are caught in a situation where they're on the risk of losing their first homes. An individual in this situation will not likely consider investing because he is faced with the more immediate need for survival.

"We believe that the overseas market is a highly speculative market, mostly buying properties with highly leveraged bank loans tied to their first home. Now that bank financing has dried up, so will sales from this particular segment," Puyat predicted.

Kasuyan Cove is a high-end seaside residential community comprising 66 hectares, only 30 of which will be sold, the rest being left as wide open spaces and common areas. Lot sizes range from 300 to 2,400 sq m. At full development the master plan envisions approximately 3,976 lots.

Super LIFESTYLE
Style . Entertaining . Pop Culture . Entertainment . Recreation
Editor
Thelma Sioson San Juan
Lifestyle Editor
Pam Pastor

Super talks 'propaganda' with infamous US billboard bandit Ron English—who's turned rush-hour traffic jams into virtual exhibits with his illegal, anti-corporate art

SUPER EXCLUSIVE!

Bad English

LOST IN TRANSIT

Paolo R. Reyes

HE IS RONALD McDONALD's worst nightmare, in a Tim-Bey-as-Szish-Palts sort of way.

In such a dream, an unflattering portrait of the figure-conscious clown would be hoisted high above the city, depicting him as an obese, jowl-faced with a belly increasing out of his yellow pants.

In the Disney-meets-Evil universe of US guerrilla artist Ron English, the billboards of America's streets and buildings become his super-size canvas, a medium to bring his utterly messages to the masses.

Since 1984, the infamous pop iconoclast has been turning traffic jams into art exhibits with his politically motivated posters—which have lampooned everything, from the long wars to consumerism, all in the name of "free speech" and "social consciousness." Legal loopholes he has fully mastered. He calls the street-art technique "subvertising," subverting familiar brand imagery and slogans into confrontational art.

And come hell or highway patrol officer, the show has always gone on for the New Jersey-based provocateur, even if a recent spending a night in the slammer, being chased by angry mobs, receiving cut-and-paste death threats, or having a lasting rat his pant-splattered leg. The powers-that-be have never won a case against the "propagandist."

Headline-grabbing street raids, English is a celebrated pop-surrealist painter and by-designer who's cut his creative stamina from Mickey Mouse, Andy Warhol, Martha Stewart, BTS' makeup, "Propoint" cybercorp, and Disney's "Gummies." He works have been featured in Morgan Spurlock's Oscar-nominated documentary "Super Size Me" and countless album covers (The Dandy Warhols seem to be a favorite client).

He was to soon be weekend to launch his Abraham Obamafest,

SUPER EXCLUSIVE!

Bad English

From page 11

using his own iconic mural of an Abraham Lincoln/Barack Obama composite, which caused a stir at its debut during the US presidential election.

Super talked to Kiyabi about "getting caught with his pants down," his one-time parents Partridge, and his diabolical plan of hijacking Mordin's reputable laugh.

Antoine Lumineau: Really dramatic. Do you wear dress like bad guys at home?

Sir: If you hang around graffiti artists, they'll tell you it's like being constantly with your pants down. The only thing it did for me was make me less naive. Once you've been arrested, you know what the actual consequences are. You have a better understanding of how the law works.

It's funny how you've avoided the long arm of the law.

The cops in New York all know me. They even wave hello on the street. I also know the president of Visa Media (billboard ad agency in the US). He doesn't know what to do about me. He doesn't want to arrest me. He wants to give me free billboards and I can assure what I put on them. It's an interesting position to be in.

Why was nobody ever able to win a lawsuit against you?

It's not illegal to take a copyrighted character or brand logo to engage in social commentary.

Lumineau: Everyone's run a line of your paintings.

He bought some of the huge "Dumbsize" from my first series—the one with Mickey Mouse and Ronald McDonald. In every room in the gallery, and bought a limited Jerry Seinfeld size for one of my paintings.

Do you ever get an inkling in your left brain's, knowing that all your efforts are wasted, once they're pulled down?

Mordin when I started. At one point I realized, had I kept all of them, they could fill up every museum in the US. Most of the time they just fly off. I've done over a thousand. I don't really care anymore.

You should come out with a book. I'd buy it.

That's a good idea. There's a seven-year statute of limitations in the US, so anything I did over seven years ago I'm not liable for.

PHANUT picnic

ABRAHAM Obama mural in Boston, 2008.

The joys of being Ely Buendia

He's written the anthems of a gener for senator. But the cool dude keep

By Gang Badoy

DELIRIOUSLY AS THE EXPONENTES OF A generation, Ely Buendia is not nonchalant about his popularity; but he doesn't go on an ego trip either. He has gotten so used to fame that it's become part of his equation.

It is no longer his novel, it is now his screen. Blown eyes check. Black hair check. Tits in jeans and tease check. Pawsome check.

That's the last text spiel before he walked out of Dilliman over a decade ago. His every gesture seems to scour with a reunion... "This is how it's been and this is how it is, your ate sees video."

Buendia is an extraordinary songwriter who seems to know the plight of everyday people who worry about ordinary things. He wrote songs that made people say, "Or ngo awa?" and "Ako ito ng gagawa?" Of late, fellow musicians (my friend Monsignor said, "Ha songs came out in buckets." And, I suppose, a generation is all the better for it.

What Buendia doesn't seem to know is that he has the makings of a perfect politician. His songs have rhetoric that can touch life and inspire action; he is clear and enigmatic at the same time.

Those are traits a Senate hopeful will kill for.

Buendia is gifted. His songwriting stance is generous, his works have given and continued to give comfort, solace, guidance, relief, hope.

The chance to see as how him live has not existed. He doesn't need to curse courage to look cool. He doesn't need to purge emotion to prove his passion before an audience. He has no ghost writer, no lawyer executive assistant to make him "look better." He doesn't need PR members like "Men in Black," "Spin Boys," or "Ely Obama cronies." He really just wears denims at night to prevent headaches before the blog lights.

One can say he is the perfect political animal precisely because he doesn't want to be one.

So what can a politician learn from Ely Buendia?

Simple things. If you've got it, produce it. If you do produce it, share it. If people benefit from the work, do it again. One more song. One more product. Improve one more life and be better with words as it. Fight with wit. Improve if you have to. Make amends, then reunite for one big gig. Save mortality squarely and carry on. Lead. Follow. Admit. Start. Feel. Start again. But ultimately, perform.

This very long SMS conversation with the frontman/frontman will tell you just that.

I know only the adult (semi-)bearded Ely. Have you ever of control (when you were younger)? You're so mellow now.

The only crazy stuff I did when I was younger was some substance abuse. I thought I was Superman then. I was also unprofessional as hell.

Do you write songs for yourself, as self-expression, or do you have some purpose or message in mind?

All my songs have been about or inspired by real people. In that sense I tend to refer to my early work as "Edit stands." But there was also a marketing angle to that [laughs]. I wanted my band to make it and it was obviously the best language to use. But how people realize that the song I write now is the way I wrote to college. It's the same. It's early.

So does that mean "greater maturity" in your present-day works?

I guess so.

Ilusyon (Illusion) is a song that I wrote when I was 17 or 18. I was in love with this girl who was in love with someone else. I was in love with the illusion of her. I wrote the song for her. I sang it to her. She left me. I sang it to myself. I sang it to the world. It's your own who knows you best.

Hmm, You certainly have a catalog which buttons to push. He knows how to make me laugh. That's very sweet.

If one goes through all your songs, will he or she get to know you?

I like a bit of mystery so I don't exactly go out my kimono. Especially in my songs.

You seem to have a great understanding of human nature. Love and life ones. It's of course like you understand people well and know what they go through.

I don't really say I understand people. In fact, I'm socially retarded.

For almost sure fame was not what you agenda. But did it come with your ruin? You seem so fragile and introverted, is this pro fame or fame-resistant?

To be honest, when you're young, fame and validation are the only thing on your mind, all the more if you're an introvert like me. Music was a great way to attain that without really changing who you are.

Did you ever consider your work as a songwriter as some form of public service?

Yes, in so far as a entertains people, I do think it's public service.

Well, I agree. So a certain extent...the times the Pavillonaire way, mind you—entertainment can be considered public service...let's talk about life and death. What became your focus when you started at uncertainty?

Well what do you do when death comes knocking? I just turned the volume up. [laughs]

What song should we play in your honor?

"Staying Alive" by the BeeGees.

Recently I found out a lot about you. Your name not your last name during the Eraserheads heydays. We won MC Hotdog EDP Dorm beauty title for many, and you'd occasionally wear your shirts inside out.

Where'd you get that info?

I asked Raymond [Marasigan].

Wah, I had to improvise or else I'd run out of clothes.

Ahaha for an enduring love [illegible] knowin' Buendia's a nice person than drunkenness jeans? It [illegible] still smell nice even if you're third time...ang galing 'no?

Tama ba yun?

Oo, "Gratne Date" song because [illegible] tapang ngayon ang nasmell.

Raymund also said that you [illegible] stanza were really skilled [illegible] technically you downgrade [illegible] being with them (the Eraserheads' Zeinala, Ariem, Buddy, Marcus, Gan) because they could be [illegible] play.

It wasn't just me dished, [illegible] were three other guys. We couldn't keep up with them [illegible] players anyway. Push rock is [illegible] rock.

Anyway, do you still wanna be an architect? Don't you [illegible] the memories you had [illegible] the time since the '90s, parang no ring architect? Like, parang? nung nasabing na siya 'wag na na lang magsulat [illegible] ang galing nga eh!

Do you share your songs [illegible] they come easy?

If I have a hard time with song, I stop it until it comes [illegible]

Good! Ahaha no, Ultimately [illegible] some [illegible] someone the same question you shared your song(s) [illegible] "Eh's songs just come out [illegible]

SUN P39 to '09!

Jollibee offers great value for money with all-new 39ers Rice Meals

AMSTERDAM, The Netherlands, 2003

BETHLEHEM, Palestine, 2000

equipment!

You've seen a toy maker? Designer toys are sort of like modern-day sculptures.

Even the way I grew up with were sculptures. When I think of my little dioramic figurines, I'm thinking a very small sculpture. Yeah. Yeah. And for all those people who think, "I can't afford paintings," toys can be done as collection.

Why do you would your art in low-income neighborhoods?

I grew up very poor. It's always bothered me that if I make it to the art world, the people I grew up with would never see my works. So I decided I'll spend half of my time giving them free art.

Art has a lot to do with consumer. Some people didn't like Jackson Pollock because he couldn't see much money from a painting. It's just paint, how can a lie worth over a million dollars? But if you, **take away the money, and if a** was just art on a wall created by nature, people will think it's very beautiful. It's art! Nobody can own it. It's just it all this wall, you'll have to do that.

Any plans landing the web and start hijacking online ads?

That would be pretty cool. Somebody actually approached me and asked if I could. I was like, "Well, please don't tell me things."

What images of the Philippines will you bring home?

It kind of reminds me of Mexico. I've only been here for a few hours. But ... I did see a lot of billboards. So it'll be back sooner rather than later I think.

Would you rent for 8K a month?
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ration, and he's probably a shoo-in s to the simple things in life

FRATERNITAS: At last year's reunion concert

buckets. He'd play it for us with just an acoustic guitar. He wasn't particularly keen on making demos. I never saw him work too hard on them, as far as I can tell if it didn't work, he just moved on to the next song." An unreleased game pseudo hope.

Who said that?

Raymund:

(laughs) That's funny... It's true.

After a song is recorded and mixed, do you find yourself saying, "Parang parondo yung Livelet 'yon eh," or are most songs "finished" as soon as they're done.

Ilang parondo ang I wrote lahat ng songs, pareho ko.

You can always improvise and revise the songs emotionally.

Yeah, yun ang ang ginagawa ko, I improvise and revise during live performances.

Many German dinners so Dilmore, people barely saw you study but you still did well.

I only remember "Hint de Hour?" (Do you have a lighter?) and "Shmoo sirbi?" (Why not?)

Ako "Wie heisen im." (What's your name?) and I still know how to count in four.

I can name at least 10 politicians who wished they were Ely Buendia. I know they do, considering the nature of his fame and time-flash influence on the daily lives of the voting population.

I like believe the opposite—I don't think Buendia would want to be any of them.

I can name at least 10 politicians who wished they were Ely Buendia. I know they do, considering the nature of his fame and time-flash influence on the daily lives of the voting population.

I like believe the opposite—I don't think Buendia would want to be any of them.

Sari-Sari owners will be the first to suffer from a tax increase

AYALA Center converges innovation, global conveniences and unique personal experiences in Glorietta 5 Mall

GLORIETTA 5 opens a whole new boulevard of business opportunities with its eight-level building offering two levels of basement parking to serve five levels of cutting-edge office spaces and three levels of retail and dining outlets

Business and Leisure Convene at Glorietta 5

A CONVERGENCE OF best retail favorites and office space, the Ayala Malls sets out to innovate and demonstrate comfort and accessibility through Glorietta 5. A mixed-use development scientifically tucked in the heart of the Makati Central Business District, Glorietta 5 is the first phase in the redevelopment plans of the Ayala Malls and spans a total of eight architecturally connected floors with modern luxury interiors that will soon house office space combined with local retail and dining favorites.

Glorietta 5's state-of-the-art design showcases contemporary external wall façade treatment and high-ceiling interior with the familiar open spaces of Ayala Center. It spans a whole new boulevard of business opportunities with its eight-level building offering two levels of basement parking to serve five levels of cutting-edge office spaces and three levels of retail and dining outlets.

An air conditioned walkway from Glorietta 5 to Glorietta 4 and a bridge way to Rustan's, maintain interconnectivity within the mall center, providing maximum convenience to shoppers. Over 250 parking slots will be connected to the multi-level parking area of Glorietta 4, giving car owners more parking option and convenient access to more mall areas.

Propelling itself toward ease of accessibility and utmost convenience through sustainable features, Ayala Malls continues to maintain world-class facilities by providing opportunities for environment, workers and shoppers throughout its malls with its state-of-the-art concepts and clean eco design lined up for the 21st century Philippines. With all these and more, only these are a few reasons why We Live Small at the Ayala Malls!

Ayala Center is the first mixed-use inner-city center integrating corporate offices, hotels, retail and residential developments. Ayala Center converges innovation, global conveniences and unique personal experiences in a dynamic environment to produce the MCBO urban fabric, founded by Ayala Brs., EDSA, Ayala Ave., Paseo de Roxas and Legaspi St., Ayala Center is more familiarly known as the area spanning the Glorietta and Greenbelt compounds. Glorietta 5 is the newest addition to the area with its recognition of its five anal retail spaces consistent with the mixed-use nature of Ayala Center.

PROPELLING itself toward ease of accessibility and utmost convenience through sustainable features, the future of business and leisure is here in Glorietta 5!

Local faves at Glorietta 5!

THE BIG HANDOVER Sale's extended! Continue to enjoy great discounts at Glorietta 5's newly-opened participating establishments ongoing now!

THE BIG HANDOVER GLORIETTA 5'S HAMLORE shops and specialty stores, plus accessible office space as they find a new haven in the newest mixed-city development by the Ayala Malls—Glorietta 5! The convergence of business and leisure, seamless accessibility and comfort is exemplified in this new modern mixed-city development, nestled at the heart of Makati.

Fashion favorites Aldo, Artwork, Beetch, Bobby Rosenanto, Bench&amen, Bread and Butter, Celine, Chacon, Classified, Confetti, Divisoria Lab, Edgar Allan, Ensemble, Freeway Sole, Folded & Hung, Hockers, ISBC, Julia Line, It's Otto, Jag, Javelin, Jose, K2, Kandy and Raven, Kamuflage, Le Bonne, Loverland, Makiba, Manefa, Marcelia's, Meg, Mendoza, Margay Mihai, Mocha, Monoh, Obello, Plaza and Prism, Pedro, Rusty Lopez, S.O. Pali, Tesha, Trevise', Tessa Hija, Via Venetos, and Wrangler also opened shop in this new retail haven.

Novel in gastronomy scene offered in Glorietta 5 such as Chowking, Greg's Grill, Gilligan's Island, Morgan, Mongkok, Shark Pork, Spaghetti Factory, The Soup Kitchen, Tokyo Tokyo, W Grill, and Yellow Cab Pizza.

Jewelry and watch shops Alcott, Cartier's, DS Alcher, Ding Velayo, Erie Conte, FBC Jewelry, Mervelles, Monsantes, Orampel's, Prima Gold, Swatch, Seiko, and Vanel's can be found in Glorietta 5 while specialty stores like Candi, Ito's, Fabric Warehouse, Kristine Fabric shops, tailoring shops like Carnage Shop, Pinta Canvas, and Slick Denim, Optical stores Rita Optical, Iltadin, The Optical Shop, and Magno Optical are now open as well.

Personal needs stores—from appliance and electronics shops like Abenson's, Home & Style, and Convenhouse to personal needs stores like National Bookstore, M.S. Somera, beauty shop Bases and Ricky Reyes Hair Salons—are all needed conveniently in Glorietta 5.

Glorietta shoppers are likewise in for a treat! With the extended Big Handover Sale, now you can enjoy great discounts at Glorietta 5's newly opened participating establishments ongoing now!

With the boulevard of business opportunities all in one mixed-city development while upholding sustainable development measures espoused by the Ayala Malls, this is just a few of the reasons why we Live Small at the Ayala Malls!

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

2b LIFESTYLE

Editor Thelma Sevese Sarchue
Chief of Correspondents Pats Pineda

Get your prom date to say yes

To what great lengths guys and girls go—surprise!

By Bianca Consuji
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

GOOD BOY. "I SAID APPROVingly to my 15-year-old brother. It was late night, and he was hunched over an paper canvas. A stack of hats, bottles of glue and colored markers were strewn all over the table.

"Eh?" he muttered, not paying attention.

"Good boy," I repeated, crooking his hair. "You're doing your homework."

"I'm not," he said. "This is for my friend. He's asking out someone to the prom and needs our help."

"What are you doing, a dance number? Why do you all have matching hats?" I said in disbelief. "It's just a prom, not a proposal."

He shrugged, and I rolled my eyes. I was, after all, talking to someone whose dare had ordered him one through a giant handmade card. A couple of months ago, my brother went home wearing a card that contained cutouts of a couple decked out in formal wear; the girl who gave to him glued a photo of her face over the female body, and drew a giant question mark over the boy's. The card read, "Could this be you?"

For several days after that, my siblings and I made faces at my brother and giggled at the card, but we grudgingly gave our approval. After all, she said deemed that the girl—whoever she was—wasn't just another vapid female. She was creative, and she had guts.

Obviously, the days of unimaginative proms are over. So are is satisfied with inane high school popularity; nowadays, proms and grad balls have to have a theme. Greek gods and goddesses, Hollywood night—everyone tries to outdo each other in the prom, and it seems to have carried over to pre-prom activities, like asking out dates.

Forget unimaginative text messages: if you want to catch the attention of your potential date, it's time to try daring gestures. You don't have to blow a lot of cash—all it takes is time and a little ingenuity.

Play games—literally

Gather some of your friends (including future prom date to play parlor games such as Scrabble, Taboo or Charades. If you're playing Scrabble, spell out the words on the board ("Go with me to the prom and I'll be your lifetime slave" should do).

If you're playing Taboo, pretend that you have the "prom" card and start giving clues—if she gets it, pop the question. If you're playing Charades, mime dancing movements and point to her, then you. Notice that we're limiting this tip to girls: high school boys will find this corny and will probably be too dense to get the hint in the first place.

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Graphics Design Aldez Joshua Cotic

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

One Tagaytay Place, the newest destination hotel down south

GUESTS AND VISITORS WHO FREQUENT the country's favorite hide-away destination will finally have a choice. One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites is the newest property managed by renowned Genesis Hotels and Resorts Corporation.

With 120 elegantly furnished and orchid-lined suites in pros-ancestry Italian aesthetics, One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites offers guests and visitors the affordable luxury and wise alternative to the existing accommodation establishments in Tagaytay City.

One Tagaytay Place takes pride in its well-appointed deluxe, 1-bedroom and penthouse suites. Each fully air-conditioned rooms and suites are savoured by some of the are electronic 14-inch flat-tech system and are furnished with a safety box, complete mini bar, DVD player, LCD flat TV, coffee and tea making facilities, and are provided with daily newspapers — promising a very relaxing and hassle-free stay for all guests.

Ideal for all types of functions, One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites can accommodate meetings, conferences, events, socials and parties ratings in any of its 4 function rooms. The Acacia Grand Ballroom can accommodate 300 persons in a banquet seating and may be divided into 2 spacious function rooms.

Envisioned to be Tagaytay City's premiere hotel and serviced residential establishment, One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites is a 13-storey hotel and serviced residence project with commercial spaces for eatery shops and entertainment. Guests who stay at One Tagaytay Place get to relax and lounge in style surrounded by facilities within easy reach of the convenience and perks of modern living. The name of One Tagaytay Place offer guests enviable view of Taal Lake, Laguna province, and verdant, breathtaking mountain scenery.

One Tagaytay Place Hotel Suites is owned and developed by Atlantic Realty Development Corp. For inquiries and reservations call (63-2)884-4136, (63-2)838-6518 or log on to www.onetagaytayplace.com.

SINULOG 2009 AT PLANTATION BAY

Plantation Bay Resort and Spa celebrates the Sinulog, the grandest fiesta in the country. On the day before the Grand Parade, guests are invited to experience the Cebuano celebration within the resort, complete with local Sinulog guests, buffet dinner with Cebuano dishes and delicacies and lively dance to commemorate the fiesta of the Santo Nino. On the day of the Grand Parade, guests are given complimentary kimpos fiestas to witness and on Gen. Maxilom Avenue to be a part of the festival with select safety and convenience. Come and enjoy least the color, the beat and the festivity of Sinulog 2009 with Plantation Bay Resort and Spa. For inquiries and reservations, please call (032) 340-2000.

BEST WESTERN PASSES QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Best Western Hotel La Corona Manila Team once again passed the annual Best Western Quality Assessment and reaffirmed its excellence in service, cleanliness and satisfaction of guest rooms and public facilities, quality of F&B products, and consistency with the services and standards of Best Western. The assessment was done by Best Western Asia Pacific's quality assurance assistant manager Ms Ann Suanthonchaiwatpa (right side of the center row) last Jan 8 to 7. The near-perfect score of the team is said to be one of the highest among all the +2,000 Best Western properties worldwide, placing the country's representative Best Western Hotel La Corona Manila to be one of the best hotels not only in the Philippines but also around the globe.

Jasmine welcomes the Year of the Ox

THE RENAISSANCE MANILA CITY HOTEL Manila's newly opened Pan Continent restaurant Jasmine ushers in the Year of the Ox with an exciting line-up of dining options and activities to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

At the culinary helm of Jasmine is noted Chinese chef par excellence Chef Wing Ki, who has developed Chinese New Year set and a la carte menus offered for lunch and dinner from Jan. 22 to Feb. 1. When dining in a group of ten, the 12-course feast set menus are recommended. The Prosperity Set Menu is at P23,988 per table while the Abundance Set Menu is at P26,888 per table. As tradition dictates, Bruno Roger Tam's menu features available at Jasmine at P438 nett per box.

For more information and reservations, call the Renaissance Makati City Hotel at 811-6888.

YEAR OPENER TREAT AT DUSIT

Let your first lucky streak this 08-8 in Dusit Thani Manila's exclusive Spa Year Opener Treat room package promo for only P4,488++ per night in its newly-renovated deluxe room. Rate is inclusive of buffet breakfast for 2 adults, complimentary local city calls, 20 percent discount at Terranova Deli, 20 percent discount on all of the hotel's restaurants including Sosa, Iron, Redcrossing and Basil, the all-day dining restaurant. Limited offering valid until Jan. 15 only. Make your reservations now! For inquiries and reservations, please call 887-3888.

Philippine Hotel Directory

Chicken at its best at the Cafe Joepney

AN INTENSE FOCUS ON CHICKEN KICKS OFF THIS weeks dinner this month of January at the Cafe Joepney. Chicken dishes from around the world will be offered in the daily lunch and dinner buffets. Discover the different ways of cooking chicken like Morocco's Chicken Tajine with Dates and Lemon, Mexican Chicken Quesadillas, India's Chicken Tikka, Jerkin' Chicken Colombo, Greek's Chicken Jambalaya, and Indonesia's Chicken Satay to mention a few from the menu cycle. The special food treat will be available until Jan. 24. Cafe Joepney is open from 12 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. for lunch and 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. for dinner. For reservations, please call 789-7300 loc. 113.

Quantum Hotels and Resorts launches beach golf vacations in Boracay

QUANTUM HOTELS AND RESORTS, ONE OF the leading condominium hotel and resort property management companies in the region, introduces the launch of its Boracay Beach Golf Vacations Program. The special holiday vacation package will be offered at The Residences at Fairways and Bluewater Sero Coast, Boracay Island, Philippines which is now managed by the Quantum Hotels and Resorts.

The Boracay Beach Golf Vacations Package is packaged at a price starting from P9,000 per approximately USD 220/3 per room and includes the following: two-night accommodation at the luxurious suites of The Residences at Fairways and Bluewater Sero Coast, Boracay; a round of golf for two persons at the Fairways and Bluewater 18-Hole Par 72 World-Class designed by Australian Master golfer and designer Graham Marsh; daily breakfast for two persons; cocktail welcome and use of the private beach and swimming pool; complimentary shuttle services (every 30 minutes) to and from the resort and coastal island center.

The package is available just to availability. For more information about The Residences at Fairways and Bluewater Sero Coast, Boracay, a round of golf for two persons at the Fairways and Bluewater 18-Hole Par 72 World-Class designed by Australian Master golfer and designer Graham Marsh; daily breakfast for two persons; cocktail welcome and use of the private beach and swimming pool; complimentary shuttle services (every 30 minutes) to and from the resort and coastal island center.

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SHOE AND BAG FINDS AT MOA'S END OF SEASON SALE

If there's anything that can give you an exciting new look for the New Year, it's a shoe with great style and a bag with attitude. The good news is that there are many fun finds at the Mall of Asia's ongoing End of Season Sale, wherein you can enjoy up to 70% discount on selected items.

We took a mall tour around the SM Mall of Asia's specialty shoe and bag stores, and had a great time checking the stuff. We're sharing here some fashion buzz . . . and oh, do make a quick dash for the mall. The Mall of Asia's End of Season Sale is until tomorrow, January 18.

GEOX

Geox's Respira shoes line is especially designed to give you comfort and let air circulate within your shoes. These have breakthrough soles with little holes in them that let air in while invariably keeping water and moisture out. Geox is located at the upper floor of the Main Mall of the SM Mall of Asia. 556-0213. Our fab finds: Soft brown flats with hardware for women; leather brown loafers with ties for men.

SCHU

Schu is always welcome in Milan and Paris inspired shoes that will literally make you walk in style. You'll make a statement with its footwear finds whether it be classic pumps for work, sassy stilettos for cocktails, or chic sandals for casual wear. Schu is located at the ground floor of the Main Wing of the SM Mall of Asia. Call 512-3940. Our fab finds: Open toe shoes with white patent, and black stripes; brown strappy wedges.

TRAFFIC

Traffic's modern and hip collection lets you have that ultra modern designer look for less. The Energy total shoe freedom with lots of choices from Traffic's brands from all over the world to help you make your own shoe statement. You'll literally stop traffic with its terrific line of shoes at the second floor of the Main Mall of the SM Mall of Asia. Call 556-0168. Our fab finds: Sleek FRAGIS leather shoes for men; fun MARTEL bronze and black rubber shoes.

FINO LEATHERWARE

Fino Leatherware stands out for its distinctive array of leather products made from top-quality leather from Italy, Australia, and South America. Its functional yet elegant designs and reasonable prices make Fino items much sought after by lovers of good taste and quality. Visit its store at the second floor of the Main Wing of the SM Mall of Asia. Call 556-0560. Our fab finds: Red Croak Office Satchel; Banana Man Look Orange Bag. Check out these great finds and more at the rest of season sale at the SM Mall of Asia.

FORWARD & SCOOP

Forward & Scoop scoops up the fashion forward shoe and bags from Asia, Europe, and the U.S. Its merchandise seem to pop out of the pages of glossy mags, so check these out at their store at the second floor of the Main Wing of the SM Mall of Asia. Call 556-0014. Our fab finds: You'll be on top of fashion wave with stylish net wedges and chunky heeled black strappy shoes. An animal print handbag and a cross green leather shoulsized bag with attitude.

*On great selections in participating establishments

WHAT'S INSIDE
Beyond awards /E3

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Assistant Editor Nico P. Avila

SATURDAY Special

Unknown leads are key to 'Slumdog's' success

PATEL AND PINTO. Fresh appeal, acting chops and natural charisma.

LOS ANGELES—"SLUMDOG Millionaire" director Danny Boyle gambled on two virtually unknown actors to play the crucial lead roles in his film. The pair delivered winningly, helping propel the film to its stunning success in this awards season.

With their fresh appeal, acting chops and natural charisma, Dev Patel and Freida Pinto anchor "Slumdog Millionaire," which is essentially a love story set in Mumbai, but combines drama, comedy and thriller genres to great entertaining effect.

CONTINUED ON E4

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Aubrey V. Anjuako

Ayala Malls

Greenbelt · Glorietta · Greenbelt 3 · Greenbelt 5

Cinema CINEPLEX 10

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

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HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	LOVE ME AGAIN	THE BRIDE WORE	TRANSPORTER 2

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Beyond

From page E1

got 'over' and, thankfully, often than happens, I just make a negative mental note of it, because I believe that awards should be given out for excellent work, not for self-serving PR tactics.

Also watch out for awards that purport to honor "best of the year" achievement, but don't actually view in listen to all of the work in the field being covered.

The best way to protect yourself against compromised awards is to realize that a number of awards these days are flawed, for one reason or other. So, we have no choice but to evaluate artists' work firsthand.

What if we don't feel confident about our ability to evaluate superior work? We'll just have to evaluate the different award competitions themselves, and come up with a rigorously abridged list of the honorees that are notable, and react only to those awards.

Remembering

From page E1

In 1984, she was given a Lifetime Achievement award by the American Film Institute. Her final film was "The Whales of August," where she starred with the incomparable Bette Davis.

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	2 BRIDE WARS	3 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	4 LOVE ME AGAIN
GLORIETTA 4	1 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	2 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	3D BRIDE WARS	
	4 TRANSPORTER 2	5 BEDTIME STORIES	6 LOVE ME AGAIN	7 AND TAKSING NA-STORIS LAUGH!
GREENBELT 1	1 BRIDE WARS		2 LOVE ME AGAIN	
GREENBELT 3	1D THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON		2D BRIDE WARS	
	3 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	4 BEDTIME STORIES	5 LOVE ME AGAIN	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1D LOVE ME AGAIN		2 BRIDE WARS	
	3 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	4 BEDTIME STORIES	5 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	
AYALA CENTER CINEMA	1 LOVE ME AGAIN	2 BEDTIME STORIES	3 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	4 BEE MOVIE
MARKET! MARKET!	1 LOVE ME AGAIN		2 AND TAKSING NA-STORIS LAUGH!	
	3 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY	4 BRIDE WARS	5 LOVE ME AGAIN	
TRINOMA	1 AND TAKSING NA-STORIS LAUGH!	2 THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON	3 BEDTIME STORIES	4 HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY
	5 BRIDE WARS	6 LOVE ME AGAIN	7D LOVE ME AGAIN	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — Ayala Malls Welcome 2009 Sale! Jan. 2-10, Glorietta

Greenbelt — Ayala Malls Welcome 2009 Sale! Jan. 2-10, Greenbelt

Alabang Town Center — Welcome 2009 Sale! Jan. 2-10, Alabang

Ayala Center Cebu — Ma. Nino Parade Jan 8 - 10, Level 3

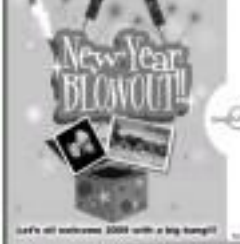
Market! Market! — Ayala Malls Welcome 2009 Sale! Jan. 2-10, Makati

Cinemalaya — 2008 Gala: Two premier venues for concertos, adaptation & cinematic events. The Screening & Awards Night, Jan. 10 at 7:30 PM

Ayala Museum — Three Masterpieces in a Lifetime: The Encouraging Works of Fernando Amorsolo. Opening Night: 7 January 2009 at Ground Floor Gallery.

Tri-Noma — Island Exhibit Jan Fair Jan. 9-10, Activity Center

Ayala Malls Welcome 2009 Sale! Jan. 2-10, Makati



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Beyond awards

By Nestor U. Torre

THE WAS WHEN AWARDS were deeply appreciated because they recognized outstanding achievements and set high standards. These days in the movies and the broadcast media, however, awards are sometimes lynched on, for all the wrong reasons, to undeserving recipients.

This is due to the fact that some people want to have it all—both popularity and dubious "honors" to shine up their compromised reputations.

But by being largely the case, the viewing and listening public should be very careful about choosing the awards they believe in. Otherwise, they'll be rubbishing people who aren't all that unlovable!

Worse, young actors will arrive at mindset "winners" who really haven't achieved much.

Standards

Also, standards of excellence have been lowered to accommodate the less than excellent, and we're all the poorer for it.

So, how do we protect ourselves against the tainted "awardees"? A good touchstone is to believe in awards that aren't sought, lobbied for and/or bought by their "winners."

A good example of this: The Magsaysay Awards, some of the winners of which are surprised to learn that, without their knowledge, they have been observed and evaluated—and found deserving of the signal honor.

Another award, handed out by the Union of Filipino Writers, also evaluates literary artists' work without their knowing that they're up for consideration. ...And, as a past winner, let me tell you, there's no better feeling than the one that comes from winning something you've done absolutely nothing to get.

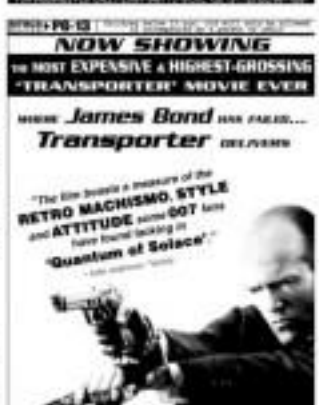
Unfortunately, there are few such awards left these days, as too many undeserving people do anything and everything to "win" trophies, not through hard and excellent work, but with astounding gumption.

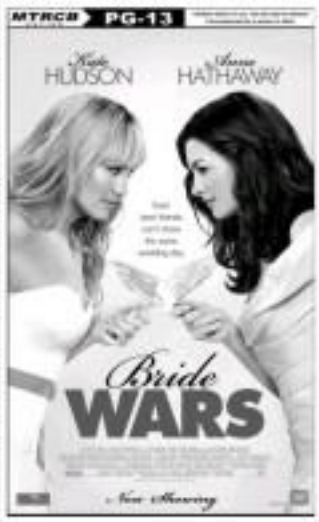
Competence

But being the case, what else can we do to sustain the award "aspect" in their game? You would look at the awards' board of judges. Do their names command pro experience, objectivity and competence to you? If not, take the awards they hand out with more than a grain of salt.

Having judged a lot of awards competitions, I can share with you that—quite a lot of awardees are all sorts of pressure tactics to

BEYOND A1





Unknown leads are key . . .

from page B1

Before their film's sweep of the recent Golden Globe Awards, Jimmy Fraida and Dev told us about the intensive casting process that took place in Bollywood and London (Dev).

Jimmy recounted how he met Freida: "I saw her on this tape at the beginning of the casting process. I've seen hundreds of girls and yet, she was the one I remembered."

Freida recalled, "At first, I thought it was a joke, because I was like, 'Why would Danny Boyle cause about me in this to shoot a film?' I was a big fan of [Trainspotting."

"SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE." Big winner at the recent Golden Globe Awards.

Orphan

Of the resulting film, an engaging tale of an orphan (Dev) who grows up on the streets of India, and whose search for his lost childhood love (Freida) drives the narrative, the actress commented, "A lot of people in India make films in Mumbai, and it's not really captured the way it is. What Danny has captured is true of Mumbai. The people maybe poor, but they don't pity themselves or hate it when other people pity them. They're survivors."

As for Dev, hers was how Danny found him: "All the actors are born in-film, except Dev who's from London, ironically. I couldn't find a young guy like him in Bollywood.

"My daughter's watch this TV show in London called 'Shiva.' They said, 'Which this guy to Shiva.' I liked Dev a lot on the show, so we met. The biggest problem was how to get rid of his mom, because she went with him everywhere."

"That's the worst thing, yeah," Dev reacted with a laugh when told about Jimmy's [audacity regarding his mother]. "It some of the auditions, we had this love scene. I was doing it with Freida and, obviously I didn't want to do that in front of my mom. It's weird, but my mom's great."

Of his "Slumdog" experience, Dev shared, "It was weird because I was a normal boy from Harrow [in north-west London]. Then, I went to this film set in Mumbai, and was playing the lead role. Things changed. I was working with adults who were passionate about what they did. We didn't realize how big the film was going to be. On the set, it was blood, sweat and tears and the chaos of Mumbai!"

Approach

Dev revealed how being in Mumbai made him change his approach toward his future roles: "When I went to India and saw the slums, they were eye-popping! I needed to get out of my foreign mindset and get myself into the character of a kid who'd grown up in the slums all his life—very different from my preconceived notion of what a slum would be—people depressed and upset.

"There was this brilliant thing," he recalled with a smile. "I was walking down the slum, and there was a small kid passing by who was just wearing a vest. He was licking an ice lolly (popsicle). It was dripping down his chest. Then there were these body men on the side, and anywhere else, you'd think, they're going to do something weird. But, one of the guys picked up the kid, got me a handkerchief, cleaned him up, and pushed him along the way back to wherever he was going. I thought that was an eye-opening."

"It's that sense of community, and they're survivors. If you live in that environment, you've got to be an optimist. From that day on, I was like, I'm going to make this kid a survivor. He's going through all the adversity and everything, but he's going to hold strong and will have that will power."

Bollywood-style dance

One of the uplifting moments in the film is a Bollywood-style dance that surprisingly works within the movie's Dickensian tale. Dev recounted how he suddenly had to learn to dance, as well: "Mr. Boyle said, 'You're going to learn to dance tomorrow as India's most coveted station, and in front of everyone.' My face dropped. I was like, 'You can't make me do that!' Because, I don't dance. It's not cool for me to dance. But, once I got over the physical aspect of dancing, the hardest bit is selling it with your face. You have to act like you're having the time of your life. I never knew I could move my hips like that!"

Laughing, the guy who has compared to rap losers do world championships, with 39 medals to his name, clinked, "The choreographer said I was a cross between Jim Carrey and Michael Jackson dancing. I took that as a compliment."

Now 18, Dev doesn't have shooting in India has changed him. "I went to India when I was 10 years old," he narrated. "I was dragged along in a family wedding by my parents. It didn't like it. We went to a village. It was totally different from Mumbai. I got home to drink by mosquitoes, and I had an upset stomach. I turned to my sister and went, 'We're not coming here again.'

Pressure

"Then, obviously, I've been back with a passionate film ever. This time, I fell in love with Mumbai. I know it sounds cheesy, but it's hard not to fall in love, because you're surrounded by humanity. There's a different mindset, especially going to the slums—those are the poorest parts of the world, and yet, acts of kindness come from those places. It was eye-opening! I was 17, doing a film out there, and I had a lot of pressure on my shoulders for a last that age. It really made me mature. I tell everyone that I felt like I've matured five years in the space of five months!"

E-mail reporter SMB@philstar.com and read his blog, "The Napster Report," at http://blog.inquirer.net/napsternet.

Remembering Hollywood's first true actress

By Bebs Cervantes

Gish's luminous presence.

IT'S THIS DAY. Lillian Gish is looked up to with awe and respect. She was Hollywood's first true actress. Born in 1893, she and younger sister, Dorothy, started acting as toddlers.

When they moved to New York, the siblings became close to another child actress, Mary Pickford, who presided the legendary director, DW Griffith, to hire the Gish sisters.

Emotional impact

But, unlike her contemporaries with stage experience, Lillian elaborated finely nuanced portrayals with stunning emotional impact. She set a new standard for movie acting that soared her the title "The First Lady of the Silent Screen."

Griffith was taken by her big, expressive eyes and used this fragile, doe-eyed appearance for the director's "invention"—the close-up. The Gish actress made their film debut in "An Unseen Enemy" in 1912. Other movies quickly followed, but as Griffith's most talented actress, Lillian was cast in his classics, like "The Birth of a Nation" (1915) and "Intolerance" (1916).

However, Lillian was soon overshadowed (aided by sequential producers and made only one film, "His Double Life," in 13 years.

In the 1940s and '50s, Hollywood once more recognized her luminous presence in such films as "Duel in the Sun" (where she was nominated for an Oscar) and "Portrait of Jennie."

REMEMBERING (1)

SATURDAY Special

JOLIE. Restrained but well-timed performance.

NOW SHOWING

Jolie triumphs in Eastwood's missing-child drama

By Rinoff Avila

"Changeling"
D: Clint Eastwood
S: Angelina Jolie

AS AN ACTRESS, Angelina Jolie has won awards for playing tormented, true-to-life characters and disturbed women, from "George Wallace" and "Girl" to "Playing by Heart" and "Girl, Interrupted."

Lately, Jolie has been dazzling between crowd-pleasing commercial projects ("Mr. and Mrs. Smith") and arthouse favorites like Michael Winterbottom's searing 2007 drama, "A Mighty Heart," in which she played Mariane Pearl, the wife of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

Fruitless search

In Clint Eastwood's period drama, "The Changeling," the actress's restrained but well-formed performance is a sight to behold. She plays Christine Collins, a single mother in 1920s Los Angeles, whose anguish over the mysterious disappearance of her 9-year-old son, Walter, drove her to confront a corrupt, arrogant and incompetent police force. After months of fruitless search, the LAPD announced that Collins' son had finally been found in Illinois, some 2,700 kilometers from California.

That momentous crime-solving "triumph" of the embattled police department had not-so-minor glitches, however: Neither Christine nor Walter's teachers and classmates knew who the new boy was—he was three inches shorter than Walter! Moreover, Walter's dental records proved beyond doubt that the kid in question wasn't who he said he was.

To add insult to injury, Christine was handed off by the police to a psychiatrist, who would after she refused to recognize the boy as her son, Wareham, in a deserted trench, a detective had accidentally stumbled upon a mass grave that concealed (unembalmed) body parts of 20 young boys. That subplot—Gordon Northcott (the chillingly stoner Jason Butler Harner), a resourceless pedophile and serial killer in the mold of Jeffrey Dahmer!

Eastwood has been our favorite director since we "discovered" him in 2005's "White Hunter, Black Heart"—some 15 years after he helmed his directorial debut, "Play Misty for Me" (1971), at age 41. He doesn't possess the cerebral aesthetic

JOSE N.

Pinoy-flavored world music in Makiling's latest album

By Nestor Torre

IT'S BEEN OVER A DECADE SINCE Makiling (formerly known as the Makiling Ensemble) made its debut in the local music scene, standing out from the crowd with its distinctively Pinoy-flavored brand of world music. Blending influences from all over the globe, the Pasonte-led outfit caught attention when they were still in their late teens and have continued to amaze a loyal following in the years since.

Not easy to label

Made up of Sweda Luza (on bagobing, violin and vocals), Yuno Bituen (on lead vocals and bass), David Sioson (guitar), and Otto Hernandez and Wed Godinez (percussion), Makiling makes the kind of music that isn't easy to label. Switching seamlessly from styles to bagobing to didgeridoo, they successfully fuse elements from such disparate genres as rock, jazz and reggae to Bach, Cuban and traditional Filipino music.

Listen to Makiling's latest album, "Malakas si Maganda," and you'll understand why the band continues to engage a wide range of audiences. They may have a hodgepodge of influences and traditions to draw from, but their compositions always manage to sound new and whole. They are complete in themselves, conveying a clear emotion or idea that you won't fail to grasp no matter the unfamiliarity of

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Paolo Bediones is a show biz survivor

By Rony M. Umoso

BEDIONES: Learns forward to more challenges this year.

LAST DECEMBER, PAOLO Bediones celebrated his 18th anniversary in showbiz with a thanksgiving party for friends from the press. "Their criticism gave me room to improve my craft," he shared. He admitted that the industry had been good to him.

Rough times

Paolo admitted that there had been rough times, but he managed to survive them. There was a time that he thought the GMA-7 management had forgotten him, because of his many projects, another disappointment was when he got involved in a business venture that put him to a bad light. Lessons learned? He realized the importance of studying any business proposal that came his way. He also learned not to be too trusting.

He said he looked forward to a challenge-filled 2009. His plans include conducting a seminar for aspiring hosts, as well as writing and publishing a "Starting 101" manual. He also wanted like to explore acting more.

As for procreating, he hopes to share his blessings and income more people who have the drive for excellence and the right attitude for media work.

Paolo is focused on more meaningful projects, setting aside plans of settling down and raising a family for explained: "I have a wonderful relationship with my loving girlfriend, but we're not in a hurry to get hitched. Besides, I'm not financially stable yet."

Meaning of life

THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR IS A time for introspection. Where am I going? What is the goal of my existence? Here are excerpts from lectures of the great sage, Sofia Phadorakiffhorse Swami, on the meaning and goal of life.

"Full realization of Him or you is an impossible goal. Other, relief fears panic itself; relax we need. We have to find wealth in positive liberation, but we shouldn't look for the wrong things.

Burdens

"We have to do the right preparatory groundwork before death. We will accept the help, knowledge and intelligence of friends, science or other sources only if they help us serve the Lord's devotees. But, we won't cultivate the tendency to carry our burdens over to the other world.

"Relax in the shelter of the Lord in the outer path. We have to understand how much endeavor is required to meet the needs of external life. That effort has to start at this life. Every step we take should be aimed at establishing a stronger relationship with the Supreme Being.

"When one thinks, 'Let me be happy, let everyone else experience pleasure or discomfort,' he is on the path of frustration as mundane passion. Devotion isn't based on blind faith. One who has taken shelter from it has to go beyond the highest limits of human intelligence. We shouldn't be influenced by concepts created by man. To do so would be shallow."

LOTUS POND
R. Valencia and S. Bernardo

TIME'S family and friends gather on the fifth night of her passing.

Gift of sight

STREET SMART
Mandy Navarro

MERIE BARRETTO-BUENAFLOR SHARES that her mother was 89 when she gave birth to her sister. Tina Being the ninth child of Ana Alejo and Antonio Barretto, Tina grew up the baby of the clan. Isn't it lovely?

Last Sept. 27, Merie celebrated her birthday with 29 guests in UDM Restaurant in Silang, Cavite. Tina was there with us—mingling, smoking and drinking hot coffee. Tina got her college degree in Dolmenian, USA. A former teller even positioned that she would marry an Australian. When Tina went to the States to stay with brother Frankie, who owns a successful bar there, she met her future husband, Americano navy officer, Ralph Bowmen, whom she married after two years of courtship.

Soon, Tina and Ralph had a baby, Tiffany, who's now 22, married and taking up law. The couple then moved to Florida, where Ralph wouldn't last and became an executive in a law firm in Sarasota. Tina missed her big family in the Philippines and soon fell into depression. She ate so much and gained a lot of weight.

She became manic depressive and took medications for it. She came home to the Philippines and stayed with her sisters, Mayor Pancho Rodriguez and Nena Siddall, and linked arms, aides and lonely artist in the gym and played tennis. Her sisters looked after her.

When Frankie celebrated his birthday he spent it at Subic, with all the Barretto siblings in attendance. They had a party every night for three days, and heard reunions daily. It was the last time Tina's family and friends gather on the fifth night of her passing.

Tina's family and friends gather on the fifth night of her passing.

Tina, Merie, Ana, Nena, Pancho, Frankie, Ralph, Tiffany, Ralph's son Ralph Jr. and Tina's grandson Ralph III were all there. Merie, Tina and Ralph Jr. are twins. Tina's grandson Ralph III is a year old. Tina's daughter Tiffany is pregnant with her first baby.

Tina's daughter Tiffany is pregnant with her first baby.

Tina's daughter Tiffany is pregnant with her first baby.

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A LINN BY JOEL ABRENA

PUGAD BABOY BY PAT LIMOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEANDTS BY ELIZABETH CHONGCO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PANANUNU

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

STONE AND WEEDY BY LYN GARCELLANO

TULDOK BY NINA CZEL

MIND MACHINE BY FRANK ABRENA

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

1				7				5
		4				9		
	6		5		9		8	
		6				7		
8				2				6
		2				5		
	1		2		3		5	
		5				6		
7				8				4

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/17

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7	1	9	8	5	3	6	4
2	4	6	1	9	7	5	8	3
6	8	5	3	7	1	4	9	2
9	7	2	4	8	6	3	5	1
3	5	4	9	2	8	1	6	7
5	2	8	1	3	9	4	7	6
8	9	1	7	6	4	2	3	5
4	6	7	5	3	2	8	1	9

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3 BEDTIME STORIES
4 BRIDE WARS
5 LOVE ME AGAIN
6 TRANSPORTER 3
7 THE SPIRIT
8 TWILIGHT
9 DESPERADAS 2
10 ANG TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT

ERMITA

1 THE SPIRIT
2 BRIDE WARS
3 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
4 BEDTIME STORIES
5 LOVE ME AGAIN
6 TRANSPORTER 3
7 THE HAUNTING of MOLLY HARTLEY
8 DESPERADAS 2
9 ANG TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT

METRO EAST

1 THE HAUNTING OF MOLLY HARTLEY
2 BRIDE WARS
3 LOVE ME AGAIN
4 TRANSPORTER 3
5 LOVE ME AGAIN
6 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
7 BEDTIME STORIES
8 TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT

NOVALICHES

1 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
2 LOVE ME AGAIN
3 BRIDE WARS
4 BEDTIME STORIES

PIONEER

1 BRIDE WARS
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 LOVE ME AGAIN
4 THE HAUNTING of MOLLY HARTLEY

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4 DAYO
5 SNAKE, RATTLE and ROLL 3

DASMARINAS

1 DAYO
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 LOVE ME AGAIN
4 BRIDE WARS

IMUS

1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 TRANSPORTER 3
3 LOVE ME AGAIN
4 BRIDE WARS

ANGELES

1 PASSENGERS
2 LOVE ME AGAIN
3 FOUR CHRISTMASES
4 BEDTIME STORIES

STARMILLS

1 DESPERADAS 2
2 LOVE ME AGAIN
3 SNAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 3
4 BEDTIME STORIES
5 ANG TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT
6 FOUR CHRISTMASES

BACOLOD

1 LOVE ME AGAIN
2 BEDTIME STORIES
3 ANG TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT
4 TWILIGHT
5 PRIDE AND GLORY
6 FOUR CHRISTMASES

ILOILO

1 THE CURIOUS CASE of BENJAMIN BUTTON
2 ANG TANGING INA N'YONG LAHAT
3 LOVE ME AGAIN
4 PASSENGERS
5 SEX DRIVE
6 BEDTIME STORIES

Wiping water, clapping faces and other boob-tube booboos

HOST: WHEN WILL YOUR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION BE HELD?

Guest: It will be on the second year of January 15th, some again!)

* * *

Host: What is your prediction about the economy for 2009?

Guest: With all of our financial crisis, there will be an inflationary effect. (Congratulations, you've coined a term yourself.)

* * *

Host: What will you be sharing with our viewers in this portion of our show?

Guest: For the most women out there, we have tips on how to attract your customers.

(Pity the poor customer!)

Activities

Host: Tell us about your group's activities.

Guest: We have very active members, and we make every month.

(—Alive active can you get?)

* * *

Host: With so many Kwentador injuries last time they, how can people injured administer first aid?

Guest: For first-order injuries, first, just disinfect with water and soap.

(One man's soap is another man's soap. . . .)

* * *

Host: What do you like to do to relax?

Guest: I like to go to the beach, listening while relaxing to the wiping of the waves.

(Hush! The waiter wipes!)

* * *

Host: What are the make up trends for 2009?

Guest: As we see, eyeshadow this year has to be splashy.

(One makes up artist's flashy is another makes up artist's splashy?)

* * *

Host: What is your order to your people during this military mission?

Guest: If they fire on, we will fire them!.

If its away!)

* * *

Concert

Host: How was your last concert. . . was it successful?

Guest: How dare! All the people watching, their faces were clapping!

(That's quite a trick.)

* * *

Host: Why did you choose her for your model?

Guest: To showcase my hairstyle, she's the best, because keeping personality, expertise because and simplicity.

(Isn't brain it for hairstyle?)

Bugoy hits all the right notes in debut album

By Nins Jesús

ENGLISH. Sinsational technician.

THE LAST SIX months have been a dizzying roller-coaster ride for "Pinoy Dream Academy"s" Bugoy Drilon: The former janitor, farmer and fish vendor from Camarines Sur entered 2008 as a student struggling to make both ends meet, but wrapped up the year with one of the biggest breakout singles of the recording season, the Ryan Cayabyab-penned "Paano Na Kaya?"

What does Bugoy do for an encore? His debut album, also called "Paano Na Kaya?," has 12 cuts, but six of them are minus-one versions. We're happy to note that a number of them are radio-friendly enough to keep the 20-year old performer's momentum going—Regine Velasquez-Alcasid's "Hiram Na Lahat Sa'Yo," Sharon Cuneta's "Paano Ba Lang Sasaya" to The Goyenechea's "Lahat ng Tao" fine, one biggers but is his masterful cover of one of Basil Valdez's biggest hits, the woolly domineering "Mahl."

The album benefits from chiefly-produced singles, mainstays notably appealing by the sunshiny arrangements of Arnold Buenaventura, Mike Villegas, Marco Sison, Maestro Mon Cang and Arnold Julianes. Like Brian Akeem, singer and Michael Bublé, Bugoy is a skilled vocal technician who has to push not his instincts to trust every song from a showcase of vocal gymnastics. Happily, under the supervision of Jonathan Manalo and producers, Jazzmac, Malou Santos and Jonathan Roque, the unpolished singer never goes overboard.

But while it's true that the new singer's soulless delivery and stylish mellowness make his songs less pop-conventional and more R&B-flavored, his voice lacks the dramatic flair needed to make Gayabosh's show-stopping "Sandali Bibi Sa Isang Buganing" and Manalo's "Bakit Ba?" soar. It is in this department where Bugoy's inexperience shows.

Melodies

In fact, can his characteristic vocal gymnastics, some melodies sound bland and flat, because there isn't much interpretive emotional nuance to Bugoy's delivery. After all, "real" isn't just about a singer's ability to break a single note into three or more notes—it's what separates the Aretha Franklins from the Celine Dions of our music industry. However, it does something that a performance can develop over time.

For now, we're happy to welcome a truly gifted singer to the local music industry, where most newbies think that the fastest way to music hell? (2) players, 4(8)s and dods to through screaming.

So, let's enjoy Bugoy's songs and hope that when the next album comes along, he shall have realized that there's more to performing than just hitting the right notes.

Final 'Cory' performance to raise funds for flood victims

THE LAST PERFORMANCE OF "Cory" the acclaimed musical on former president Corazon Cojuangco Aquino's life and times, will be held at 8:30 p.m. today at Meralco Theater. The special performance marks Cory's birthday later this month, so producers composer Ryan Pimentel has decided to offer tickets at 50 percent discount (visit Ticketworld at 891-9999) to enable more people to see the deeply moving and highly-entertaining show.

Since Philippine is from Cagayan de Oro City she has also opted to donate the proceeds of tonight's performance to the flood victims of the city and its environs, with funds routed through the diocese's archbishop.

"Cory" (cephlib Jury Alvarez in the title role, and also stars Shaiwan Serrano, Robert Seña, Pinky Marquez, Tommy Peñaredondo) is to return in more romantic productions of the musical is being lined up for performance throughout the country and in the United States.

09 Broadway sensation at CCP

From Jan. 20 to 25, the CCP and the Asian Cultural Council Philippines present the 09 Broadway sensation, "I Land," starring acclaimed actor and lyric dancer, Ian Weckford, at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino. The performances are for the benefit of the ACC Philippines Fellowship Program that gives grants for international exchange activities in the arts to artists, scholars humanitarians in the Mindanao Academic and Research Institute for the Arts scholarship fund.

"I Land" is Weckford's moving search for the meaning of heritage in a post-modern world, weaving together traditional Hawaiian hula, hip-hop, Hawaiian folk story and spoken word. Call 832-3261 or 891-9999.

On Hallmark Channel

On "The Oprah Winfrey Show," Jan. 16, guests include Ali Bates, scott's, Mark Consuelos, Gayle King and Spike Lee. Jan. 25, marriage expert, M. Gary Neuman, an affair-proofing your marriage.

Niño Jesus exhibit

The Congregación del Santísimo Nombre del Niño Jesus is holding its annual exhibit of images of the Santo Niño until Jan. 24 at the PNB Financial Center. There will be a grand procession of the images on Jan. 25. Call 322-4128.

ALVAREZ. Winning plaudits for her insightful and felt portrayal of Cory Aquino.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 8 p.m., "Gunning You." Tomorrow at 11 a.m., "Flags of Our Fathers." Jan. 19 at 3 p.m., "Witness." Jan. 20 at 9 p.m., "No Way Out II." Jan. 21 at 9 p.m., "Still Three Came Love." Jan. 22 at 11 a.m., "The Stuff of Fantasies." Jan. 23 at 3 p.m., "The Murder of Princess Diana."

On Cinemax today at 7 a.m., "Superman 2." Tomorrow at 1 p.m., "Journey to the Center of the Earth." Jan. 19 at 7 a.m., "Mirage." Jan. 20 at 9 p.m., "Before to Launch." Jan. 21 at 7 a.m., "The Nasty Professor." Jan. 22 at 9 p.m., "Transmission Mission." Jan. 23 at 7 a.m., "Grown's 11."

Jolie triumphs in Eastwood's . . .

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of Stanley Kubrick, the in-your-face storytelling conviction of Martin Scorsese, or the eye-popping dreamscapes of Steven Spielberg, but Eastwood's straightforward, rough-around-the-edges style ("Unforgiven," "Mystic River," "Million Dollar Baby," "Flags of Our Fathers") never fails to engage and entertain.

The prolific 78-year-old director ages with graceful facility—and he never runs out of intelligent to-rights moviegoers can ponder on (from tonight, his other Oscar-entry, "Gran Torino," is an even better film.) He's not afraid to forego in-your-face showiness in favor of a more subtle, unassuming style that's all about the story and the characters.

Taking her cue from the prolific director, Jolie sidesteps the crowd-pleasing acting crutches she's famous for: The preny smile, the in-crucible, know-it-all cocksureness, etc. The actress avoids emotional blackmail by relying on restraint and intelligence to breathe life into Christine, a mentally anguished single over the archetype's frustrating arrogance and inability to help. Restraint is key to Angelina's latest acting triumph.

Shifting between the 1920s and the late 1930s, Eastwood and screenwriter J. Michael Straczynski ("Changeling") tell the story of Christine Collins (Jolie), a single mother who works as a supervisor at the Los Angeles Telephone Company. One day, she returns home from work to find that her son, Walter (Gattlin Griffith), has disappeared. Months later, the police tell her that they've found him in Illinois and are returning him to her.

But the boy who steps off the train is not her son. Christine tells the police that they've made a mistake, but they insist that they've found Walter. Christine's protests are ignored by the police, who are more concerned with making the city look good than with finding the truth. Christine's protests are ignored by the police, who are more concerned with making the city look good than with finding the truth.